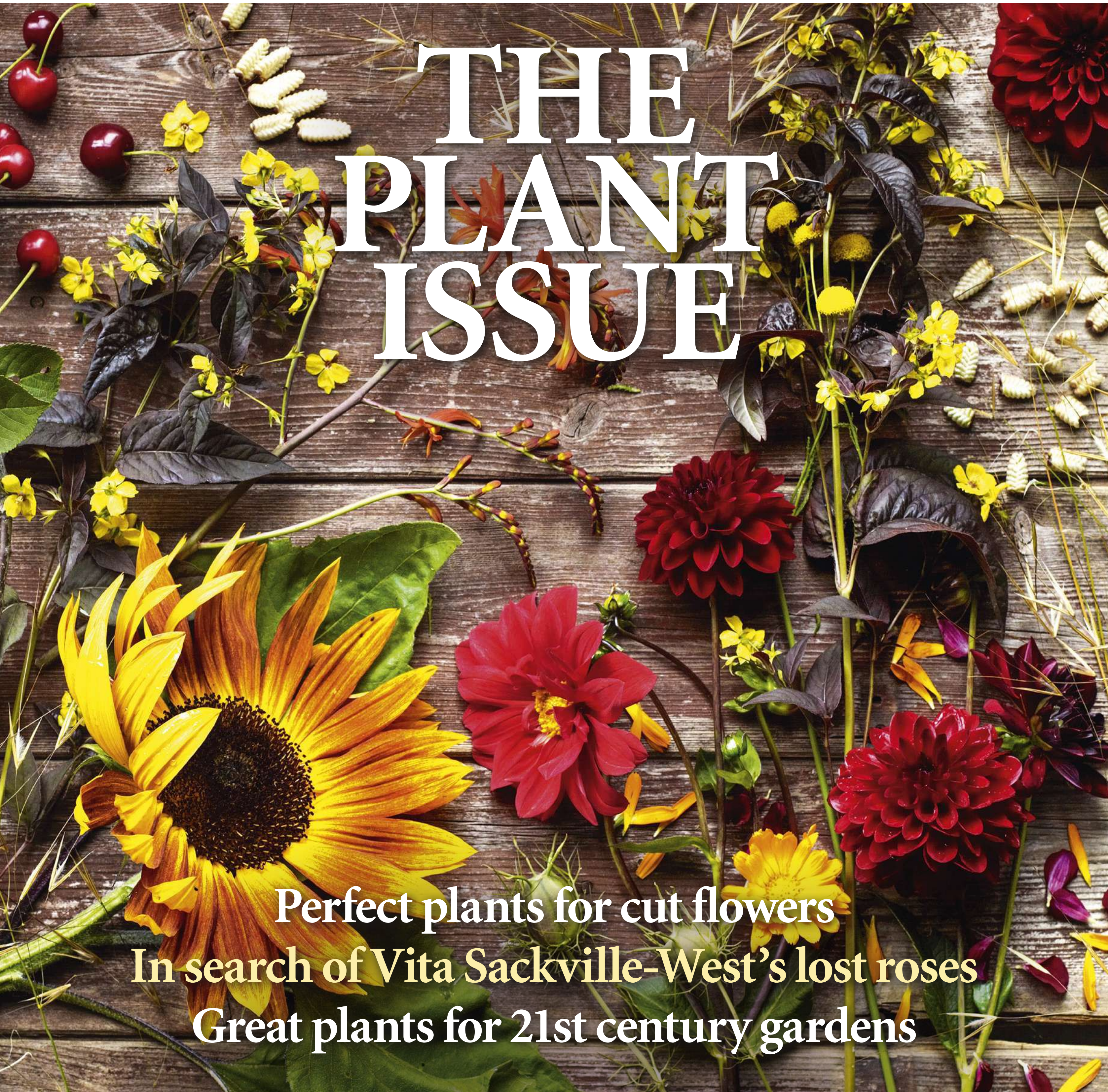
SPECIAL OFFER
Limited edition flower prints
PAGE 103

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

SPECIAL EDITION



THE PLANT ISSUE

Perfect plants for cut flowers
In search of Vita Sackville-West's lost roses
Great plants for 21st century gardens

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Linnaeus

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editor's letter

I'm very excited to introduce our new Special Edition, devoted to plants. Whatever your style or size of garden, plants are often the key element and I hope that you find lots of inspiration over the following pages. As editor, I get to meet some of the most talented garden designers in the world and am always fascinated to find out where they get their planting ideas from. Surprisingly, it's often travels to wild places rather than garden visits that really excites them. From Transylvanian meadows to the mountains of Mexico, there are definitely key places of pilgrimage, so I thought it would be interesting to ask ten well-travelled plant experts to recommend their favourite destinations. Vita Sackville-West was renowned for her love of roses and in 1926, after travelling to Tehran, wrote: 'It is for the exuberance of the native wildings that one must wait before one understands the reputation of Persian roses'. Troy Scott Smith, head gardener at Sissinghurst, is on a quest to track down and replant as many of the roses Vita originally planted as possible, and on page 34 he recommends 44 of the best. One of my favourite features this issue looks at cut flowers, and I'm delighted to offer readers the opportunity to buy limited-edition prints of Andrew Montgomery's beautiful images (see page 103 for details). Finally we end on a heart-warming feature about a group of determined women who used the beauty of flowers to transform a long-neglected neighbourhood in Toxteth, Liverpool. It's always great to hear about the power of flowers. I hope you enjoy the issue.

Juliet

GARDENS
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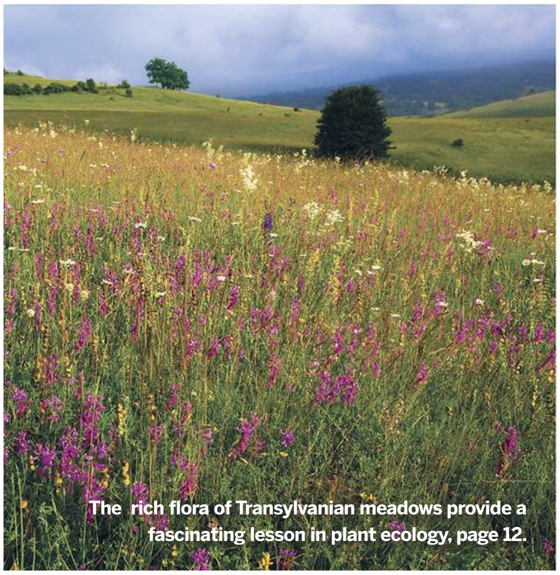
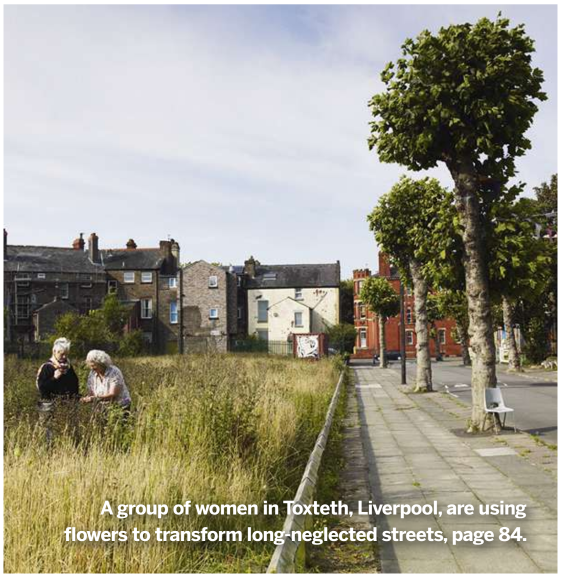
THE PLANT ISSUE

Save money when you **subscribe to the digital edition** – see page 32



The rich flora of Transylvanian meadows provide a fascinating lesson in plant ecology, page 12.



A group of women in Toxteth, Liverpool, are using flowers to transform long-neglected streets, page 84.

WILDFLOWER WONDERS OF THE WORLD / BOB GIBBONS; ANDREW MONTGOMERY

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Garden designer, plantsman and columnist.

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34 **Vita's lost roses** Vita Sackville-West often referred to her love of roses in her writing, detailing particular ones she grew. Sissinghurst's head gardener, Troy Scott Smith, is on a mission to replant some of her favourites

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84 **Street life** The streets of Toxteth in Liverpool were known for their neglect and dereliction. However, a group of gardeners' endeavours to green up their neighbourhood, has brought new hope – and the possibility of the Turner Prize

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The pink flowers of *Echinacea pallida* dominate this North American prairie mix, one of James Hitchmough's 21st-century planting schemes developed for the University of Oxford Botanic Garden, page 72.

MARIANNE MAJERUS

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COVER IMAGE

Cut flower arrangement by Anne Townley
Photograph by
Andrew Montgomery

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- Join fellow enthusiasts on a tour of the **Gardens of Alsace and Rhineland** – page 10
- Save money when you **subscribe to the digital edition** – see page 32
- Browse the ***Gardens Illustrated* Shop** and take advantage of our great offers in time for Christmas – page 99
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TROY SCOTT SMITH

Aside from a year as curator with the RHS, Troy has worked exclusively at National Trust gardens, including Bodnant Garden and Sissinghurst Castle, where he's been head gardener since 2013. On page 34 he shares his fascinating quest to find its lost roses.

"Immersing myself in the roses at Sissinghurst, I am developing a way of gardening that places beauty and romance first."

DIANA WOOLF

Diana is a freelance journalist specialising in art and design. Although she's written extensively about crafts, she never tires of the subject as there's always the chance of discovering a new exciting talent, such as Laura Youngson Coll whom she profiles on page 68.

"I love the way Laura's work makes you do a double take – you can't believe her intricate sculptures are made of scraps of leather."

LEWIS FYFE

ANDREA JONES

Andrea has photographed gardens professionally for more than 20 years and is now one of the world's foremost garden photographers. On page 60 she travels to Northumberland to photograph the beautiful garden created by Philippa Hodkinson who specialises in hardy annuals.

"As a rule great gardeners relish sharing their years of experience and plant knowledge, and Philippa was no exception."

JONATHAN BUCKLEY

Jonathan is an award-winning garden photographer who has collaborated with renowned gardening writers, such as Christopher Lloyd, Carol Klein and Sarah Raven. On page 46 he photographs the glorious borders created by Arne Maynard at Cottesbrooke Hall.

"It was great to concentrate on just one beautifully planted border and shoot it in detail over the course of a summer's day."

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Exclusive Reader Events 2016

Gardens Illustrated Festival
22-23 April 2016 – page 8

Reader Holiday to Alsace and Rhineland
11-15 June 2016 – page 10

TICKETS NOW ON SALE

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED Festival

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Make a date to join us at our Festival to celebrate gardens, gardening, plants and design

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welcome

Join us for the second *Gardens Illustrated* Festival, now in the beautiful Cotswold town of Tetbury. Taking place over the weekend of 22-23 April 2016, the festival will once again gather together an eclectic and exciting line-up of speakers – offering a fascinating programme of talks on a range of horticultural topics.

Building on the success of last year's event, we have moved location from Malmesbury to the nearby and the equally charming Cotswold town of Tetbury, allowing for more festival activities in one place. Alongside the talks there will be a marquee selling a fine selection of plants and gardening goods from some of our favourite companies and artisan makers. You'll also find our garden plant and design clinic offering individual advice, a series of workshops, and freshly made teas, coffees and lunches.

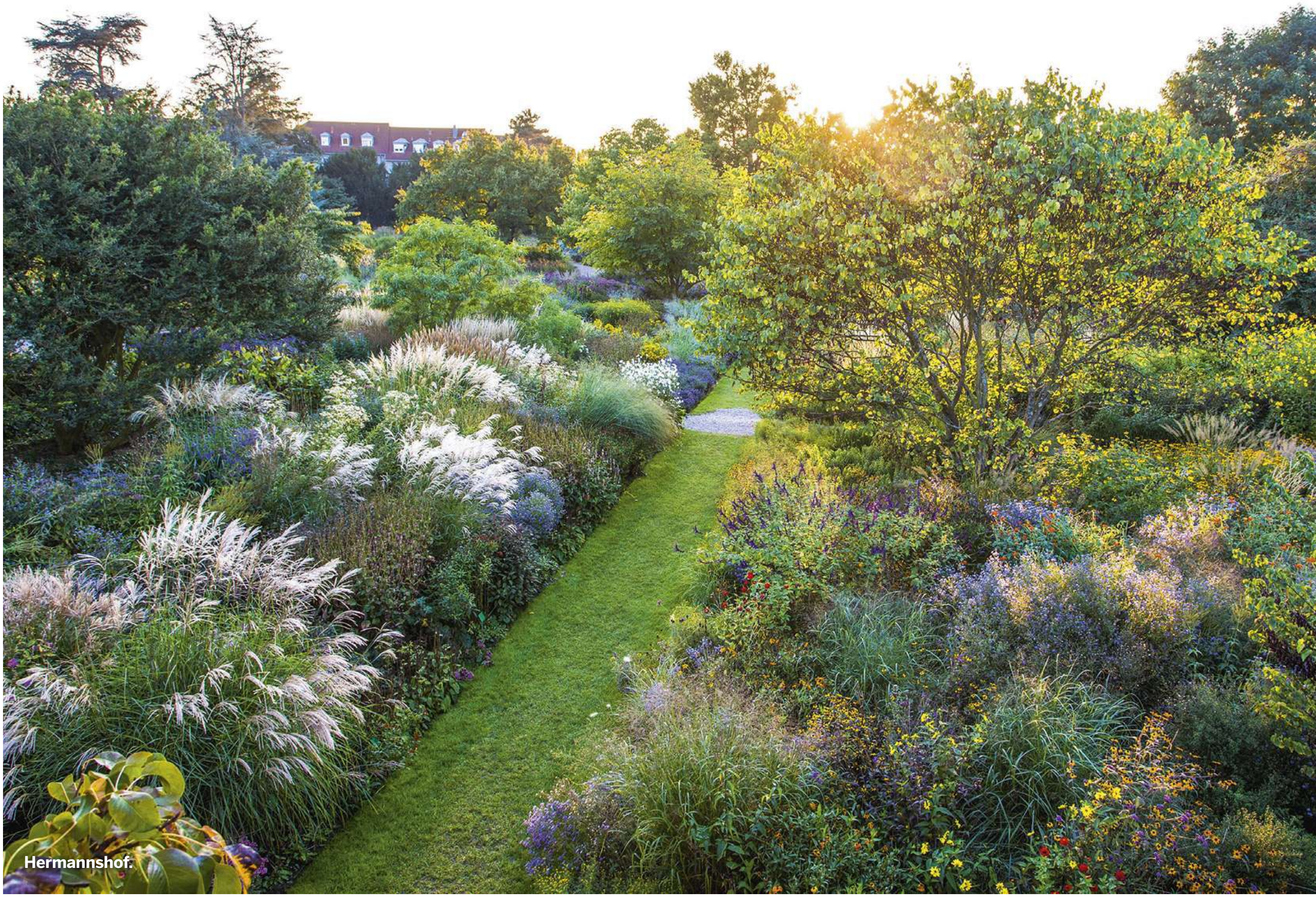
And, as with last year, we'll also be organising guided tours of local gardens.

Confirmed speakers for 2016 include: Arne Maynard, Cleve West, Roy Lancaster, Tim Richardson, Mark Diacono, James Alexander-Sinclair, Fergus Garrett, Jinny Blom, Carol Klein, Helen Dillon, Troy Scott Smith, Val Bourne, Matthew Wilson, Marina Christopher and Chris Beardshaw.

For full details of all events and ticket sales visit

gardensfestival.com

TIM GAINEY / ALAMY; 2015 FESTIVAL IMAGES BY JASON INGRAM; PORTRAIT OF HELEN DILLON BY JANE SEBIRE


Hermannshof.

11-15 June 2016

Gardens of Alsace and Rhineland

Join writer and plantsman Noël Kingsbury and like-minded *Gardens Illustrated* readers to discover the richly planted gardens that span the borderland areas of Alsace and Rhineland, sharing a unique French and German heritage and character

Tour leader
Dr Noël Kingsbury, garden writer, lecturer and planting designer, is an expert in perennials and planting schemes with a particular interest in continental planting design.

The fertile Rhine river valley cuts between the Vosges Mountains and the Black Forest and forms a natural border between France, Switzerland and the southwesterly corner of Germany, sometimes referred to as the 'Tuscany of Germany'. On this trip we travel northwards, weaving between France and Germany, over an area that's home to a surprisingly rich selection of gardens.

Your five-day tour includes a visit to **Landhaus Ettenbühl**, renowned for its roses, where you will be joined at lunch by the owner and head gardener. You'll also travel into the Vosges Mountains to visit **Jardin d'altitude du Haut Chitelet**, which features lovely alpine planting. At this time of year the wild flowers of the region should also be at their peak, making a visit to the mountains particularly memorable. Nearby is the renowned and atmospheric **Le Jardin de Berchigranges**, set amid mountain forests, it's a garden with a strongly naturalistic feel and huge personality, and was recently featured in *Gardens Illustrated*

Landhaus Ettenbühl.

Schloßgarten Schwetzingen.

Le Jardin de Berchigranges.

Château d'Isenbourg.

[issue 219]. Also featured recently in *Gardens Illustrated* [issue 225], is **Hermannshof** in Weinheim – a real highlight of the tour. It is one of Germany's most exciting public gardens and very much at the forefront of experimental planting design. **Les Jardins de la Ferme Bleue**, designated one of France's *Jardin Remarquable*, is a wonderful example of the region's typical, historic, cobalt-blue-painted architecture, with the farm set in a series of refined and intimate garden rooms. We also visit **Schloßgarten Schwetzingen**, one of the most imposing and complex historical gardens in Germany, now lavishly restored, and offering visitors a fascinating view into the 18th century's intellectual and gardening passions.

During your visit you will stay at **Château d'Isenbourg**, in the vine-clad foothills of the Vosges, and at **Hotel Europäischer Hof**, Heidelberg, where generous hospitality and culinary specialities will contribute to your enjoyment of the region. □

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Natural inspiration

Increasingly, leading designers are looking to nature for planting inspiration. With hundreds of breathtaking places around the world to choose from, we talk to ten experts to find out their favourite places to see flowers in the wild

An amazing display of wild flowers growing at Mazama Ridge, near Mount Rainier.

WILDFLOWER WONDERS OF THE WORLD / BOB GIBBONS

Plant hunter

Dan Hinkley

Mount Rainier, USA

The active volcano that dominates the skyline of the greater Puget Sound, Mount Rainier, rises to 4,392m. Because of this height and the warm, moist air flowing over its slopes from the Pacific, it is recognised as having more annual snowfall than any other place on earth. It stands to reason that spring on the slopes surrounding its glacier-clad peak does not commence until mid July when sweeps of erythroniums and pulsatilla paint the newly revealed alpine meadows. These transition week to week in a highly charged growing season, rushing towards the first frosts of mid September. During that time, mind-bending displays of lupins, geraniums, asters, camassias, erigerons, campanulas, phacelias and veronicas predominate; lower forested slopes boast flowers of two species of rhododendron, the rare *Elliottia pyroliflora* and woodland flora including: disporums, streptopus, actaea, clintonias, achlys and numerous orchids.

Plant expert and designer

Dr Noël Kingsbury

Kyrgyzstan (right)

Geographically isolated by mountainous terrain, the central Asian country of Kyrgyzstan has an incredibly rich flora, scattered across a very wide range of habitats. With a harshly continental climate, everything in a particular place tends to flower at once, so meadows can look as if someone has scattered an entire seed catalogue. Best time to visit is in July and August.

NURLAN KALCHINOV / ALAMY

YEVGEN TIMASHOV / CORBIS

Kew-trained, head gardener

Matthew Reese

Caucausus (left)

The Caucasus have a huge flora and include plants that work well in the garden too. Here you'll find *Inula magnifica*, *Campanula lactiflora*, *Telekia speciosa*, *Geranium psilostemon*, *Astrantia maxima* and *Colchicum speciosum*… to name but a few. These are plants that we all grow here in the UK and which have stood the test of time and yet there's still so much to try from this fascinating part of the world.

Nursery woman, Special Plants

Derry Watkins

Western Cape, South Africa (below)

The Western Cape has the most remarkable and extraordinarily varied flora. The world is divided up into six floral kingdoms and, although the smallest, the Cape Region constitutes one of them. You'll find weird and wonderful collections of different plants just about everywhere you look and with such specific geographical conditions many plants are unique to this area. Visit in mid August to late September. Finding plants is easy – just step out of your car, they're everywhere.

WILDFLOWER WONDERS OF THE WORLD / BOB GIBBONS

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Botanist

Dr James Compton

Sichuan Province, China (above)

From spring to early summer, Sichuan Province in Western China must be one of the greatest wild-plant spotting areas in the world. As fellow botanist Martyn Rix once remarked as we crossed a river on a rickety rope bridge to head into one of the region's forests: "This is like taking a walk through the pages of *The Hillier Manual*."

WILDFLOWER WONDERS OF THE WORLD / BOB GIBBONS; PORTRAIT PAUL BARNEY; ANNAICK GUITTENY

Nurseryman, Edulis

Paul Barney

Transylvania, Romania

The astounding biodiversity of this region's landscapes has been celebrated by Prince Charles's recreation of Transylvanian hay meadows at Highgrove. Areas such as Apuseni boast traditional meadows, dramatic limestone gorges, and species-rich forest, virtually devoid of pesticides. Expect to encounter drifts of *Gentiana asclepiadea*, *Dianthus carthusianorum*, *Centaurea jacea* and *Anacamptis morio*. Forest margins are particularly rich with *Pimpinella major*, *Seseli libanotis*,*Deschampsia cespitosa* and *Daphne mezereum*, while woodland flora includes species of *Polygonatum*, *Soldanella* and *Veratrum*. The Transfagarasan Pass, which crosses the southern part of the Carpathian Mountains, is a botanical rollercoaster.

ROBERT BIRKBY / LOOP IMAGES / CORBIS

Designer and plant expert

Dan Pearson

Greece

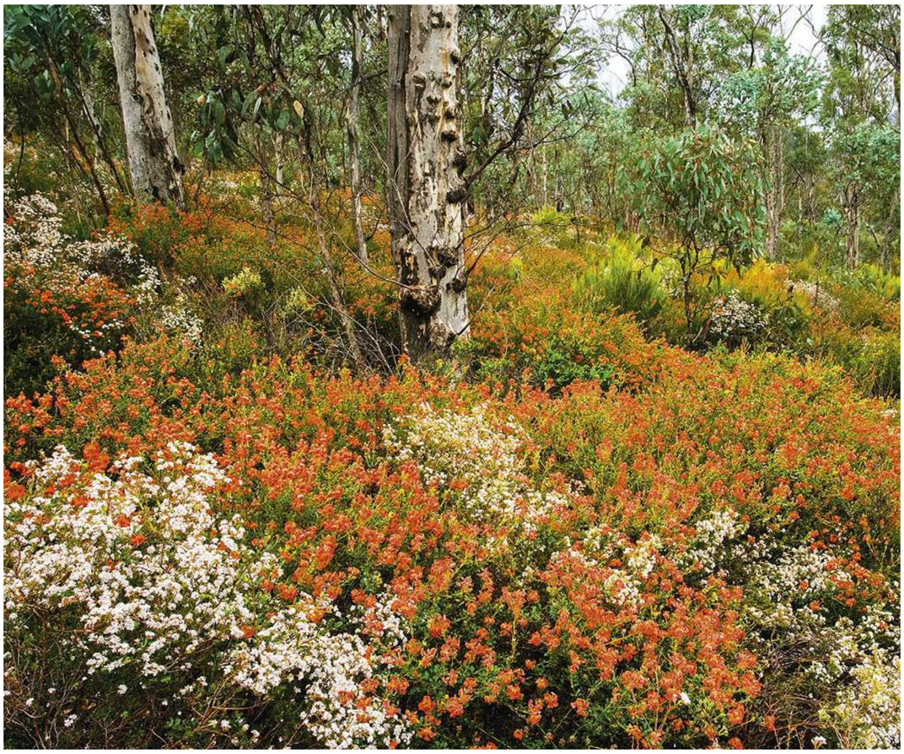
Spring in Greece has been preparing itself over winter, with rains nurturing growth that has been dormant during their long dry summer. It arrives early by comparison with the UK, giving one a chance to indulge ahead of time and with a compression; spring and summer rolled into a brief but glorious window ahead of the summer burning off. Many of the plants you recognise among the aromatic scrub, orchids with peonies, giant fennel, euphorbias, lupins and corydalis. All this under an electric-blue sky.

Horticultural ecologist

Professor James Hitchmough

Western Australia (right)

Inland Western Australia has lots of desert ephemerals, but for me it's the heathlands that really wow. These are incredibly species diverse and, particularly two to four years after a fire has gone through and done its regenerating work. Orange *Banksia*, multi-hued *Verticordia*, violet and silver *Dampiera*… some of these plants could be from another planet. Head either south or north of Perth, between September and the end of November. But first pop into Kings Park and Botanic Garden to see it all in microcosm.



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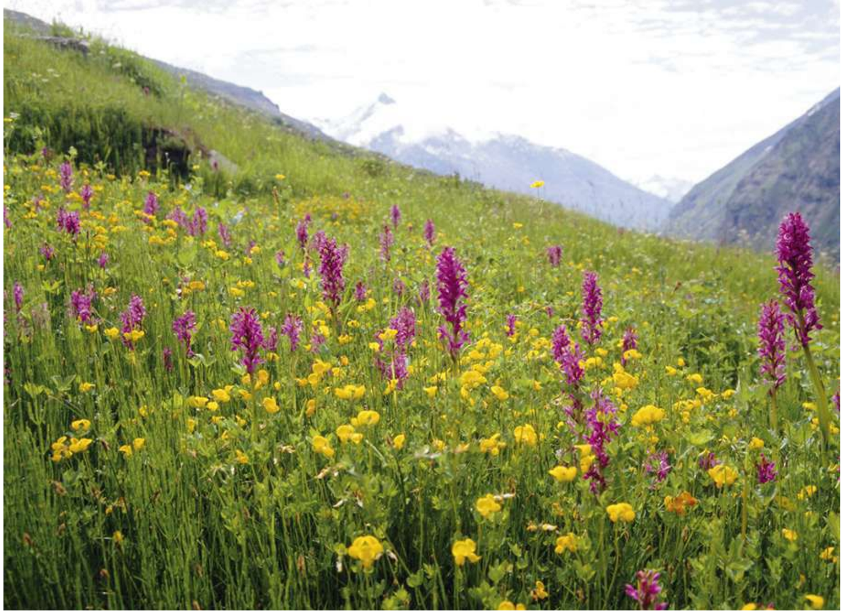


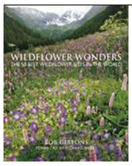
JENNY PATE / ROBERTHARDING/CORBIS

Nursery woman, Orchard Dene

Chris Marchant

Himachal Pradesh, North India (above)

Hiking through Himachal Pradesh, on the fringes of the Himalayas, is like an ascent of discovery. With hanging green valleys, flanked by rocky peaks, and high altitudes where glacial meltwater courses through ground fissures, you'll find incredible floral diversity that demonstrates both resilience and beauty.



Wildflower Wonders

by Bob Gibbons (Bloomsbury, 2014)

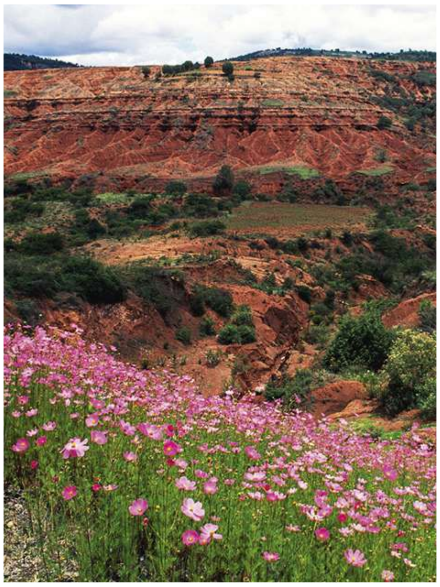
Discover more about the best places to see plants growing in the wild. Available from the *Gardens Illustrated* bookshop, see page 96 for details.

Nurseryman, Pan-Global Plants

Nick Macer

Mexico (below)

From hot, sweaty jungle to coastal areas; cool mountain forests to arid desert conditions, the country's topography and climatic conditions vary enormously and as a consequence, you can find a huge diversity of species. In November, after summer rain and autumn sunshine, the roadsides are ablaze with billowing masses of wild flowers. It's the most fabulous place to see species *Dahlia*, not to mention *Nolina*, *Yucca* and *Agave*, and the epiphytic bromeliads of the cloud forests.



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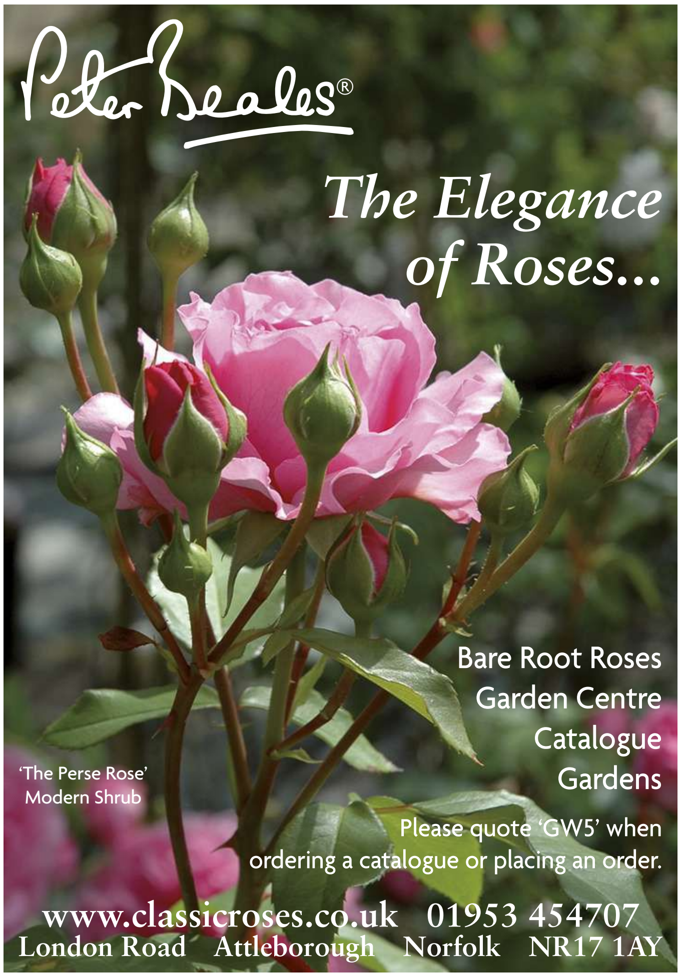

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20 OF THE BEST NURSERIES

Wondering where to go to buy interesting plants in the UK? Garden expert **Val Bourne** selects some of the nation's finest nurseries

ILLUSTRATIONS HANNAH McVICAR

1 Ashwood Nurseries

Although it masquerades as a garden centre, with an excellent restaurant and gift shop, this is an immaculate plantsman's nursery. Strengths are hellebores, hepaticas, salvias and winter-flowering shrubs.

Mail order available (M).
Address (A) Ashwood Lower Lane, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 0AE.
Tel (T) 01384 401996.
Web (W) ashwoodnurseries.com
Open (O) Every day except Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

2 Avondale Nursery

Plant Heritage collections of wood anemone, sanguisorba and New England aster, plus a huge range of perennials. The well-labelled display garden is inspirational.

A Russell's Nursery, Mill Hill, Baginton, Warwickshire CV8 3AG.
T 07979 093096.
W avondalenursery.co.uk
O Mar-Sep inclusive.

3 Beeches Nursery

A plant lover's paradise packed with 3,000 interesting plants, some very rare. Give yourself plenty of time to explore and you'll find plants that aren't available anywhere else. **M.**

A Ashdon, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2HB.
T 01799 584362.
W beechesnursery.co.uk
O Every day.

4 The Beth Chatto Gardens and Nursery

Beth Chatto, inspired by husband Andrew, pioneered ecological gardening by placing plants in the right location – their website usefully lists plants for specific places. Most are propagated from the garden under the care of David Ward. There's no better place to buy herbaceous plants, ferns and grasses. **M.**

A Elmstead Market, Colchester, Essex CO7 7DB.
T 01206 822007.
W bethchatto.co.uk
O Every day.

5 Blackmoor Nurseries

The best range of fruit trees and bushes, expertly packed and well-grown – many on the estate. Expert help available and informative website. Rootstocks and AGMs clearly displayed. **M.**

A Blackmoor, Nr Liss, Hampshire GU33 6BS.
T 01420 477978.
W blackmoor.co.uk

6 Claire Austin Hardy Plants

Claire Austin's relocated nursery has settled down and the peonies, hemerocallis and irises have been replanted in the fields. Great easy-to-grow perennials, and around 90 cultivars of peonies (which are sold bare-root from October). **M.**

A White Hopton Farm, Wern Lane, Sarn, Newtown, Powys SY16 4EN.
T 01686 670342.
W claireaustin-hardyplants.co.uk
O Open days 4 and 16 June 2016.

7 Cotswold Garden Flowers

Bob Brown's nursery comes up with surprises every time. Specialities include kniphofias, crocosmias and unusual bulbous plants. Regular talks and a display garden that shines from spring until late autumn. **M.**

A Sands Lane, Badsey, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 7EZ.
T 01386 833849.
W cgf.net
O Every day Mar-Sep; Mon-Fri, Oct-Feb.

8 Dove Cottage Nursery and Garden

This is a photogenic place, with display gardens to inspire. The well-grown plants have to be easy and fairly slug proof and the range of grasses and perennials is particularly suited to naturalistic, prairie style. Hellebores and hardy geraniums also excellent.

A Shibden Hall Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 9XA.
T 01422 203553.
W dovecottagenursery.co.uk
O Wed-Sun, Mar-Jun; Wed-Sat, Jul-Sep.

9 Edulis

The name of Paul Barney's no-frills nursery is an academic way of saying edible, reflecting part of his range that includes unusual Asian plants. Umbels also feature heavily and there are plants here you won't find elsewhere. Paul also has 200 snowdrops this year. **M.**

A The Walled Garden, Tidmarsh Lane, Pangbourne, Berkshire RG8 8HT.
T 01635 578113.
W edulis.co.uk
O Every Tues, Feb-Oct, plus open days.

Continue overleaf

▷ 10 Hall Farm Nursery

Christine and Nic Ffoulkes-Jones started this nursery almost 30 years ago and run it on environmental principles, using peat-free compost. Winners of 46 RHS golds, they know their plants and only grow the best.
A Kinnerley, Nr Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 8DH.
T 01691 682135.
W hallfarmnursery.co.uk
O Tues-Sat, Mar-Sep.

11 Harveys Garden Plants

Roger Harvey's nursery is one of the best places for named snowdrops and other woodlanders such as wood anemones, epimediums, erythroniums and trilliums. **M.**
A Great Green, Thurston, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3SJ.
T 01359 233363.
W harveysgardenplants.co.uk
O Mon-Sun.

12 Long Acre Plants

A full range of shade-loving perennials, grasses and ferns grown by an expert plantsman. Lots of information on the website and the best packed mail order I have ever seen. **M.**
A Charlton Musgrove, Nr Wincanton , Somerset BA9 8EX.
T 01963 32802.
W plantsforshade.co.uk
O Thurs-Fri, Mar-Oct.

13 Marchants Hardy Plants

Graham Gough has a musical background and now creates crescendos with grasses and perennials. His list of miscanthus and molinia is top-notch. Sanguisorbas, veronicastrums, asters and much more.
A 2 Marchants Cottages, Laughton, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 6AJ.
T 01323 811737.
W marchantshardyplants.co.uk
O Wed-Sat early May to late Oct.

14 The Mead Nursery

Stephen and Emma Lewis-Dale sell a wide range of potted bulbs, alpines and perennials on their first-rate nursery. The mature garden setting is inspiring and the collection, always correctly labelled, constantly changes.
A Brokerswood, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4EG.
T 01373 859990.
W themeadnursery.co.uk
O Wed-Sat, Feb-mid-Oct, then by appointment.

15 Old Court Nurseries and the Picton Garden

A family-run nursery with an emphasis on asters, late-season perennials and some alpines. The Plant Heritage collection of asters, many rescued by Paul Picton, is second to none. There's mail order but the display garden is fantastic so do visit. **M.**
A Colwall, Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6QE.
T 01684 540416.
W autumnasters.co.uk
O Wed-Sat, May-Jul; Wed-Sun Aug; every day 1 Sep-18 Oct.

16 Pan-Global Plants

Nick Macer's nursery, Pan-Global Plants, is aptly named for this well-travelled nurseryman who turns plant hunter in the winter months, meaning he stocks plants that no one else has. His range is wide, from trees and shrubs to bamboos and bulbs, as well as plenty of exotic plants from far-flung places. **M.**
A Frampton-on-Severn, Gloucestershire GL2 7EX.
T 01452 741641.
W panglobalplants.com
O Wed-Sun, Feb-Oct, then by appointment.

17 The Place for Plants

Rupert Ely's nursery and 20-acre garden and arboretum carries a huge range of plants mainly bought in from top UK and Continental suppliers. Specialities include Japanese acers, magnolias and many cornus and there is a Plant Heritage collection of euonymus. **M** (Sep-Mar, then a limited service).
A East Bergholt Place, East Bergholt, Suffolk CO7 6UP.
T 01206 299224.
W placeforplants.co.uk
O Every day.

18 The Plant Specialist

This tip-top nursery, run by Sean Walter and Roger Pounder, combines garden landscaping with superb plants at the forefront of garden design. Sanguisorbas, lots of stylish grasses, heleniums, echinaceas and veronicastrums (and much more) beautifully displayed. **M.**
A Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire HP16 0BH.
T 01494 866650.
W theplantspecialist.co.uk
O Wed-Sat, Apr-Oct.

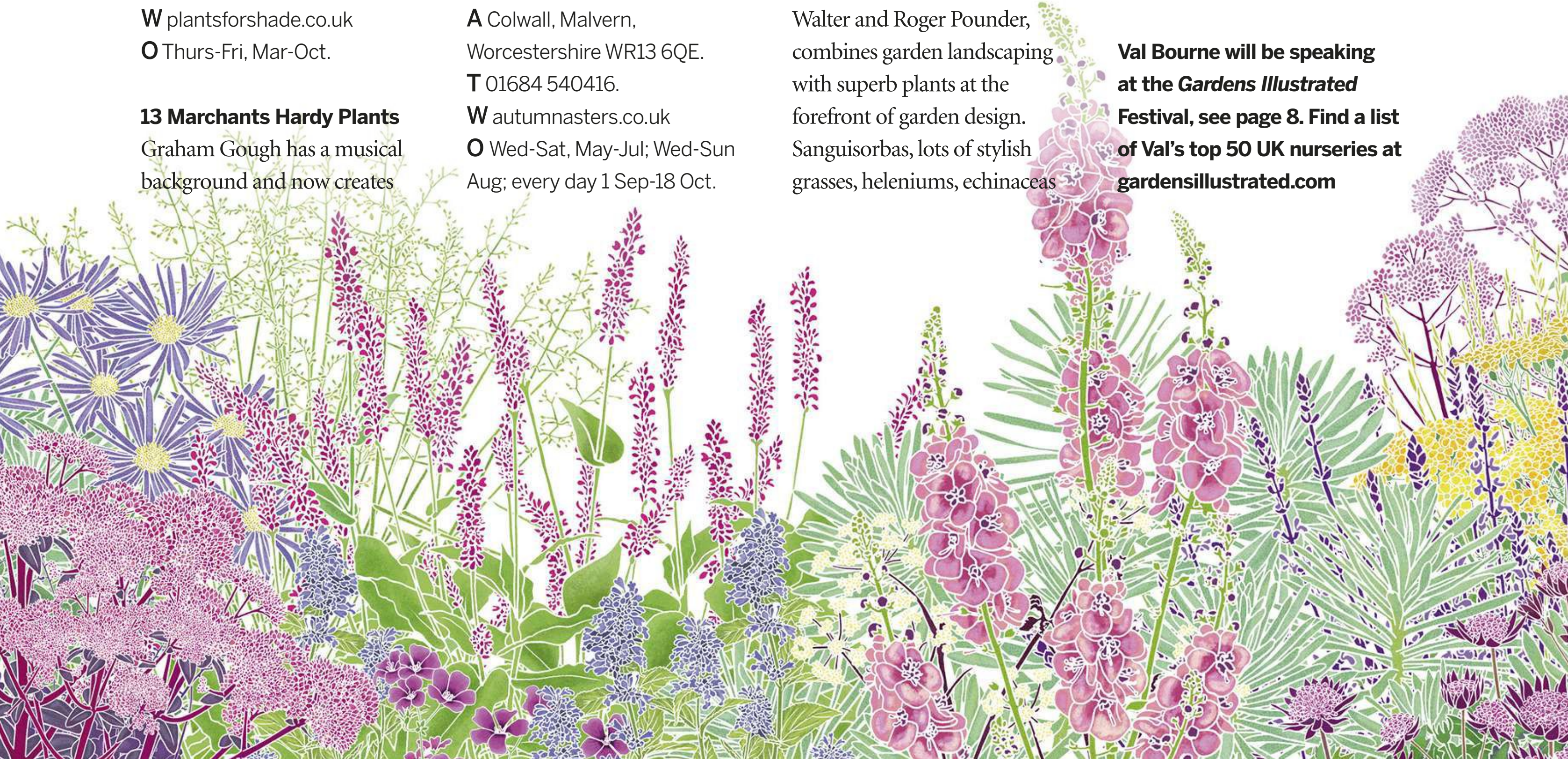
19 Special Plants

Derry Watkins exudes energy and her nursery is packed with good plants, including tender perennials, such as pelargoniums and salvias. A good range of hardy perennials and an excellent seed list. Derry also runs courses and opens her gardens. **M.**
A Cold Ashton, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 8LA.
T 01225 891686.
W specialplants.net
O Every day, Mar-Oct, then by appointment.

20 Woottens of Wenhaston

Sand blows along the lanes close to this Suffolk nursery but it's perfect for irises, hardy chrysanthemums and agapanthus – just three of the specialisms. Auriculas and pelargoniums feature heavily. **M.**
A Blackheath, Wenhaston, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9HD.
T 01502 478258.
W woottensplants.com
O Every day (not 25 Dec-2 Jan).

Val Bourne will be speaking at the *Gardens Illustrated* Festival, see page 8. Find a list of Val's top 50 UK nurseries at gardensillustrated.com



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Beech apple rack, £230, Hibbitt.

Work in progress trolley, £240, Baileys Home.

Le Parfait canning and storage jars, from £6.58, Kaufmann Mercantile.

Thermometer, £12, Labour and Wait.

Hedgehog boot brush, £19.50, Hibbitt.

Tamper and dibber, £9, Hen & Hammock.

Gable folding trestle table, £396, Rowen & Wren.

Linen pinny apron, £58, Hen & Hammock.

Olive bucket, £38, Hen & Hammock.

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Vintage deed boxes, £45, The Other Duckling.

Vintage wall cabinet, £145, The Other Duckling.

Orla Kiely linear stem storage jar, £25, Unique & Unity.

Shaws classic Belfast sink, £199, Shaws of Darwen.

Vintage galvanised bin with swing lid, £65, The Other Duckling.

Galvanised steel garden table, £162, Manufactum.

Le Chameau Giverny women's short boot, £85, Webury.

Patrick Thomson gardener's apron, £200, The New Craftsmen.

Japanese kettle, £86, Labour and Wait.

Metal four pot cutlery holder, £32, The Other Duckling.

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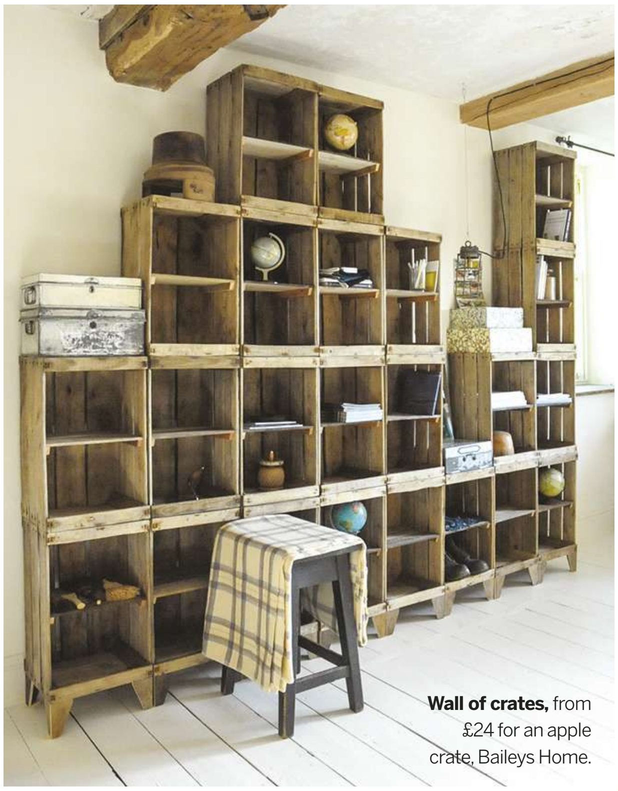
Wall of crates, from
£24 for an apple
crate, Baileys Home.

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La Castellamonte,**
from £4,695, BigFire.

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Welly rack,
£95, Baileys Home.

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straw basket,** £40,
French Connection.

Raised planting table,
£115, Arbor.

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Hardiness ratings explained

All you need to know about garden hardiness ratings and the systems that have been developed to help you get the best from your garden and plants

WORDS DR JOHN DAVID AND LEIGH HUNT ILLUSTRATIONS CHRIS JONES AND LIAM McAULEY

When we buy a plant, there's always the temptation to make an impulse purchase. Yet the first question that should pop into a gardener's head is 'will it actually thrive in my garden?' In a climate as varied as the British Isles, one of the main factors used to work this out is whether it can survive the winter outdoors unaided – what we call 'hardiness'.

There's no agreed definition of hardiness but, for our purposes, it is a plant's ability to endure cold conditions, or in the UK, the ability to withstand alternating periods of freezing and relatively mild, wet weather. Plants are adapted to tolerate cold to varying degrees. Some will take a light frost (temperatures just below freezing) for a couple of hours, others cope with long periods of freezing to remarkably low temperatures, while many plants are in-between.

Much of this tolerance depends on a plant's origin. Clearly plants that are dormant or deciduous during the winter are more likely to cope with colder temperatures. Evergreens are, in general, less hardy because they keep their leaves through the winter and so are more prone to the effects of freezing.

Although origin is a good guide to hardiness, it can't be relied upon. There are hardy plants from subtropical and even tropical areas, such as *Kniphofia thomsonii* from the mountains of Kenya on the equator. Likewise, there are remarkably tender plants from closer to home, such as those that occur on UK coasts where frost is a rarity.

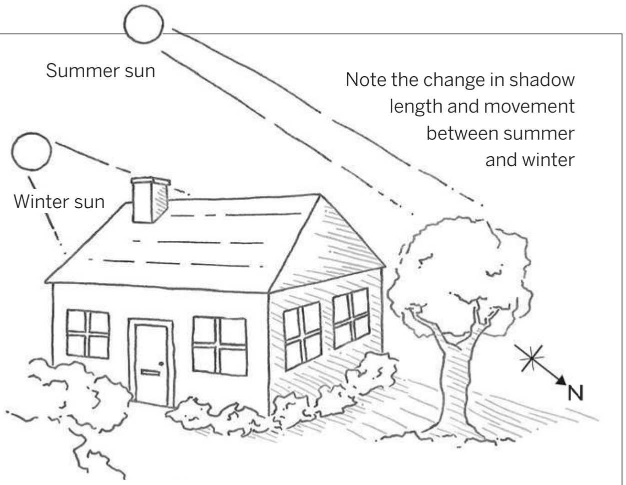
As a result, a plant's hardiness is established over the years by trial and error. It is not simply the ability to survive freezing temperatures but also to weather winter wet, or swift changes of temperature, as British winters are highly changeable. In continental climates such as the Eastern United States and central Europe, the weather patterns are more stable so the seasons are more marked.

Based on accumulated experience of a plant's performance we can establish its hardiness. This is usually presented as a scale, from least hardy to most hardy, normally using winter minimum temperature as the measure. This is exemplified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) scale, developed in the 1960s for North America but now widely used in other countries. The USDA system is now a scale of zones from 1 (very hardy) to 13 (least hardy). The zones are defined by 10°F steps, each one being more recently divided into two 5°F subzones indicated 'a' and 'b'. The US zones have been mapped in remarkable detail and plants have been assigned according to the coldest zone they can grow in.

The USDA system has been applied to the UK and Europe. However, there are some major differences between the climate of

▷

Microclimate



Note the change in shadow length and movement between summer and winter

For those keen to grow tender plants, a south-facing aspect is desirable to maximise exposure to the sun's heat. Likewise, shelter is critical, either to protect plants from cold winds or from cold air flowing down hillsides.

Gardeners will talk about frost pockets or frost hollows. These are where cold air drains off exposed slopes, as cold air is heavier than warm air, and collects in valleys or in sheltered areas where it cannot escape. This leads to cooler overnight temperatures and more frosts. Where possible, lay out your garden to avoid slowing or trapping cold as it filters down slopes.

Hedges, fences and walls can be strategically placed to protect plants or to provide sheltered nooks where you can grow plants that would not flourish in the open. Walls provide an additional benefit because they absorb heat during the day, which they then give off again at night. Cleverly, this keeps the surrounding air several degrees warmer, which can make all the difference to your plants on a frosty day. Bear in mind, though, that structures such as walls, fences and hedges also cast shadow. This can mean that after an overnight frost, even though the daytime temperature rises above freezing, the ground remains frozen when in permanent shade.

▷ northwest Europe and the eastern seaboard of the USA. The latter has a more continental climate, with colder winters and much hotter summers than we experience in the UK.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) has recently updated its more descriptive system of hardiness ratings to reflect the need for the greater precision gardeners require to make choices about plants for their gardens. Like the USDA system, it has adopted a scale based on winter minimum temperatures but is in 5°C steps. However, reflecting the variable nature of our winters, each rating also has a description for the garden conditions. The scale runs in the opposite direction to the USDA system, but there are broad equivalents between the two. Even so, for the reasons explained, just because a plant is rated USDA zone 8a, it doesn't mean that it will thrive in a similarly rated area in the UK; nor that RHS hardiness rating 4 will be the same as USDA zone 8.

The important thing to remember about the RHS system is that it is a rating of the plant's hardiness and has not been translated into mapped zones for the UK. This is because the climate gardeners experience in their gardens here can vary significantly within a region. If you are keen to get the most from your garden, it is essential to understand the local conditions for your garden and, indeed, of the marked variations within it – the latter being known as the microclimate (see box on previous page).

Add to this the knowledge of the weather experienced in your garden. Consider recording the dates of the last and first frost each year, frequency of frost, rainfall and its distribution through the year as well as wind direction. This will build up a more complete picture that can be compared against the RHS descriptions. Another approach is to look at the ratings of plants you are successfully growing and grow more of these.

In the end, hardiness systems provide a useful guide to predict what gardeners should be able grow in their gardens. While beginners are likely to depend on the certainty of growing plants that are reliably hardy, enthusiasts will want to push the boundaries and experiment with more borderline plants, and by doing so extend our knowledge of a plant's hardiness. □

Dr John David is Head of Horticultural Taxonomy at RHS Wisley and Leigh Hunt is Principal Horticultural Advisor at RHS Wisley.

USEFUL INFORMATION

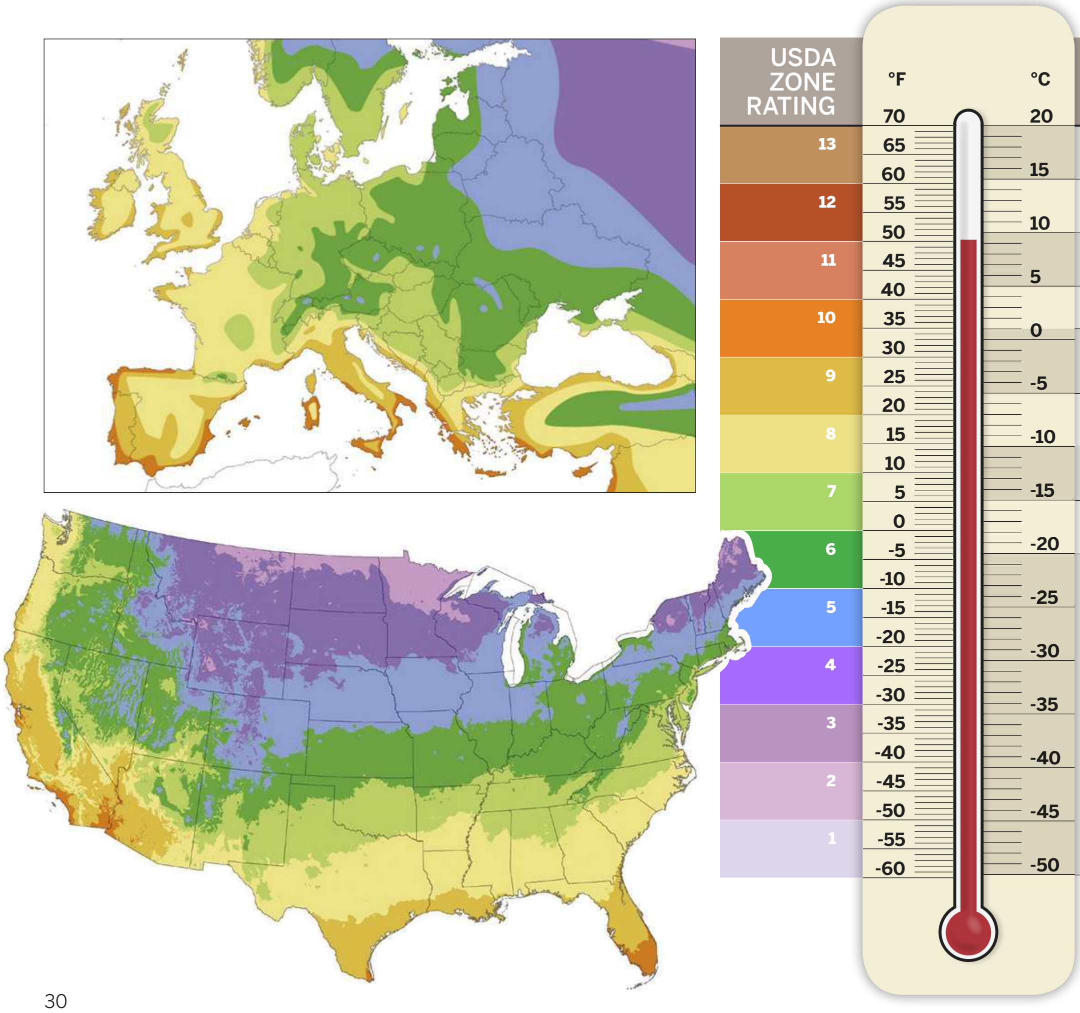
Online

RHS hardiness ratings rhs.org.uk/plants/pdfs/2012_rhs-hardiness-rating

USDA hardiness maps planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb

Books

The Gardener's Guide to Weather and Climate by Michael Allaby (Timber Press, 2015)*. ***Weather in the Garden*** by Jane Taylor (John Murray Publishers, 1996).



RHS PLANT RATING	RHS CATEGORY
H1a	Heated greenhouse – tropical
H1b	Heated greenhouse – subtropical
H1c	Heated greenhouse – warm temperate
H2	Tender – cool or frost-free greenhouse
H3	Half-hardy – unheated greenhouse/mild winter
H4	Hardy – average winter
H5	Hardy – cold winter
H6	Hardy – very cold winter
H7	Very hardy

The USDA hardiness rating system applies minimum temperatures to create zones. The maps here give a basic overview of zones in the USA and Europe (more detailed maps are available). The RHS system (see above) considers a plant's ability to withstand cold temperatures.

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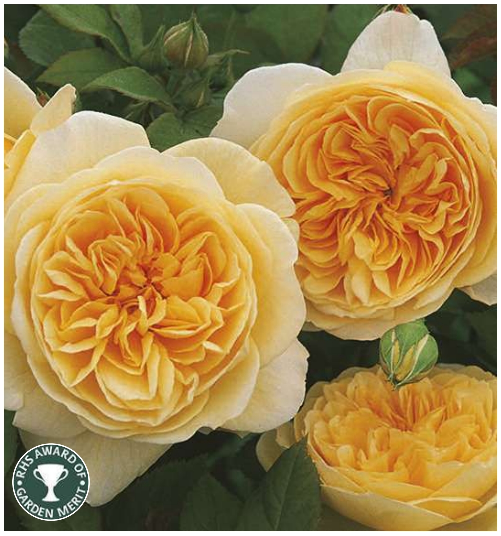
RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

Teasing Georgia £16.50
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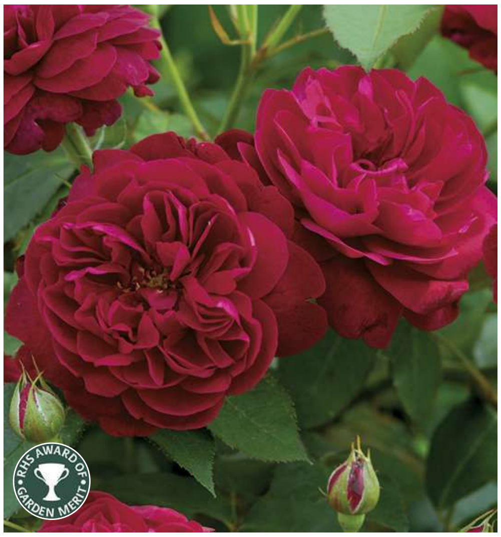
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Darcey Bussell £16.50
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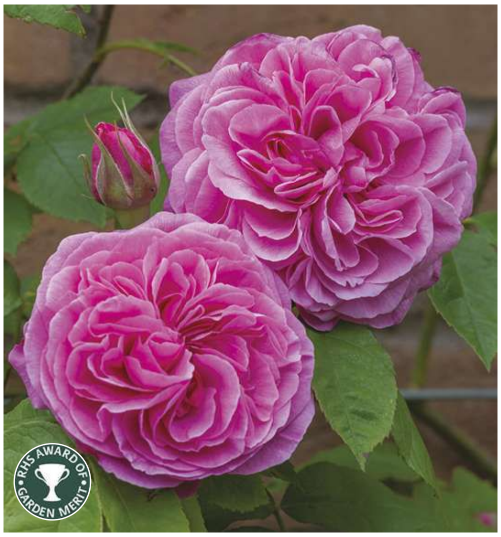
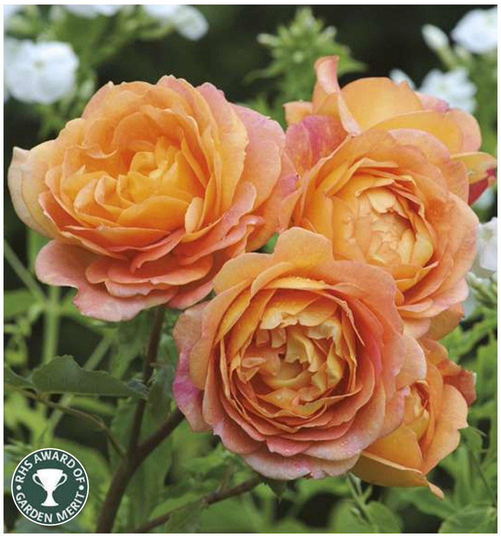

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

Gertrude Jekyll £16.50
Classic rosettes. Strong Old Rose fragrance.

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

The Generous Gardener £16.50
Climbing growth. Strong, complex fragrance.


RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

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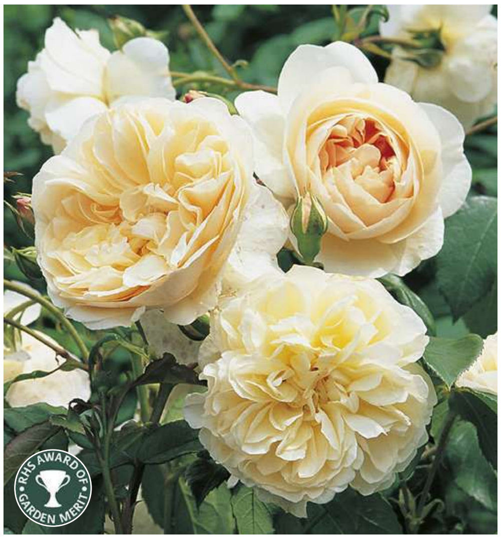
RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

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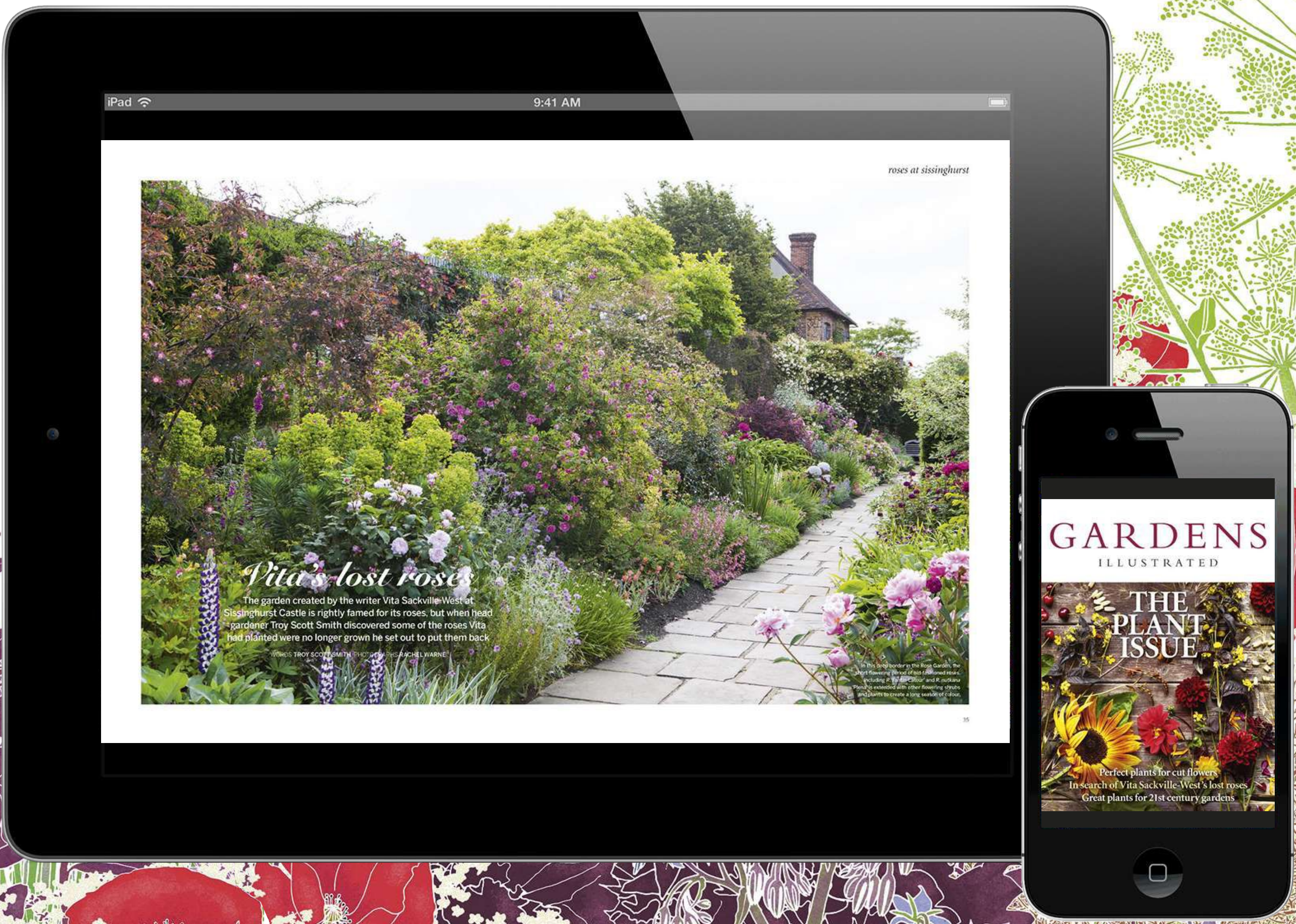

Vita's lost roses

The garden created by the writer Vita Sackville-West at Sissinghurst Castle is rightly famed for its roses, but when head gardener Troy Scott Smith discovered some of the roses Vita had planted were no longer grown he set out to put them back

WORDS TROY SCOTT SMITH PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WARNE

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GARDENS
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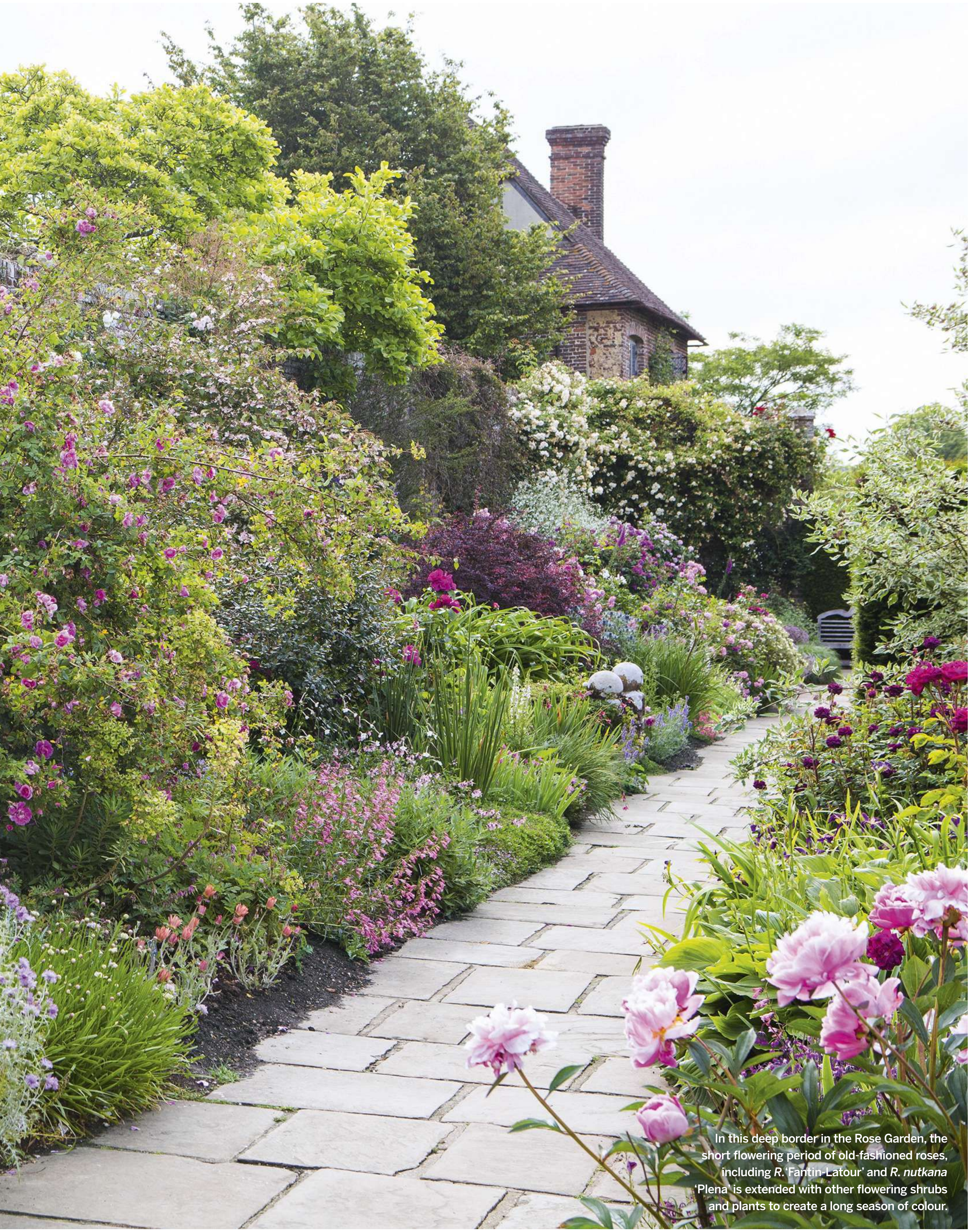


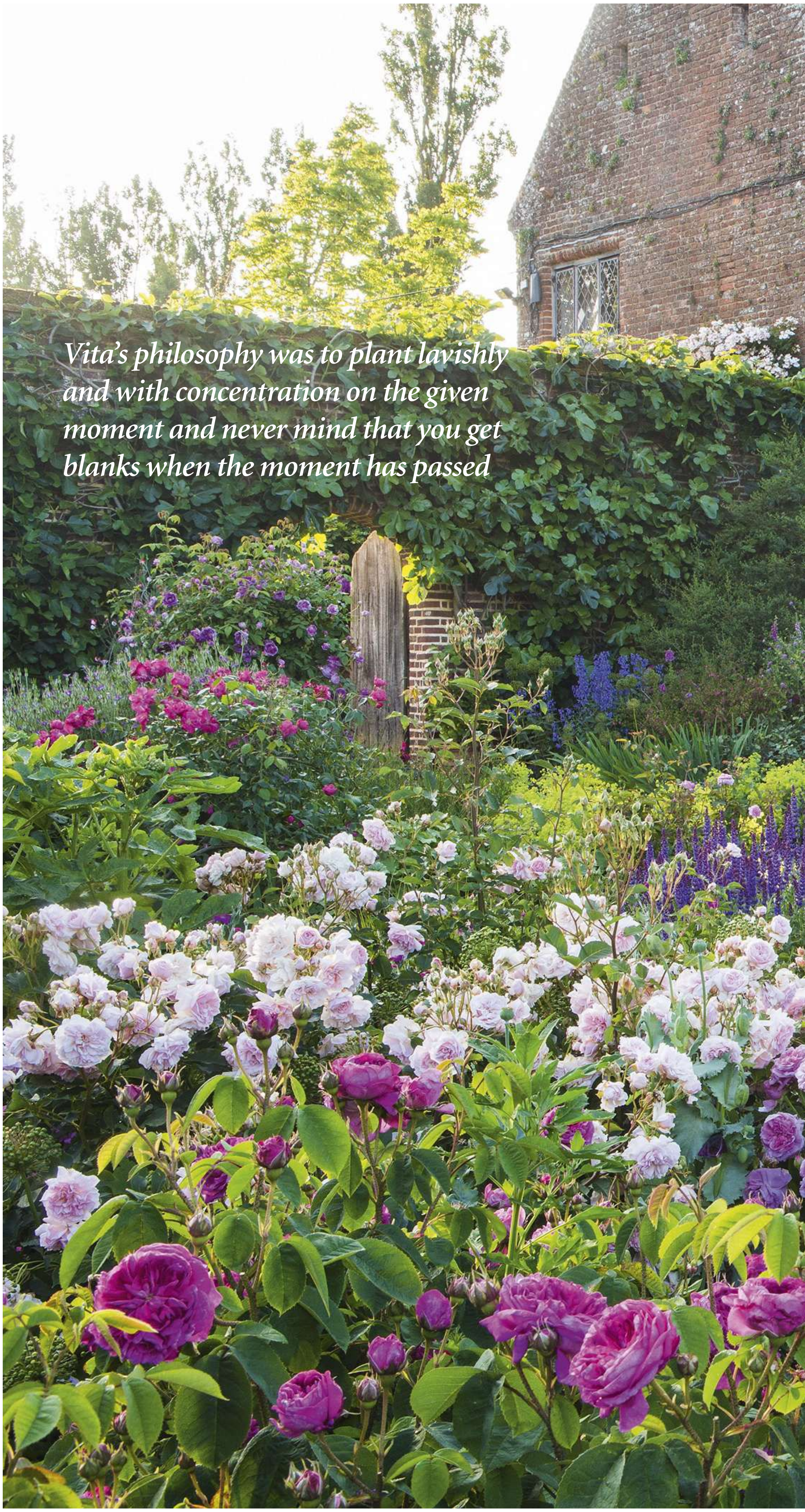
In this deep border in the Rose Garden, the short flowering period of old-fashioned roses, including *R.* 'Fantin-Latour' and *R. nutkana* 'Plena' is extended with other flowering shrubs and plants to create a long season of colour.

Sissinghurst is a refuge dedicated to beauty. For many centuries people have lived and worked here; a sense of history emanates from the rosy red bricks of the tower and an authenticity grows from its soil. These rich layers of history fascinated its most celebrated owner, the writer and gardener Vita Sackville-West, and her response to them shaped the creation of the garden we know today.

Vita first saw Sissinghurst on a spring day in 1930. It had lain empty since the death of the previous owner, a farmer who had regarded the surrounding land as little more than a convenient dumping ground. But, amid the old bedsteads and tangle of bindweed Vita saw what might be made of it, writing later that: 'It caught instantly at my heart and my imagination. I fell in love; love at first sight… It was Sleeping Beauty's Castle.'

I too found myself captivated by Sissinghurst's romantic beauty when I first came here as visitor more than a quarter of a century ago. In the early 1990s I worked here as a gardener for five years and came to love the garden even more, but when in 2013 I was lucky enough to return as head gardener, I realised that an important part of the garden was missing. Although head gardeners Pamela Schwerdt and Sibylle Kreutzberger had kept the gardens much as Vita intended in the years following her death in 1962, they had tried to move the planting on and began removing some of Vita's roses that were underperforming, replacing them with newer, longer-flowering roses, a process of evolution continued by subsequent head gardeners. By the time I arrived in 2013, around only 100 of the 300 or so different cultivars and species Vita had grown remained. The time seemed right to put some of these back.

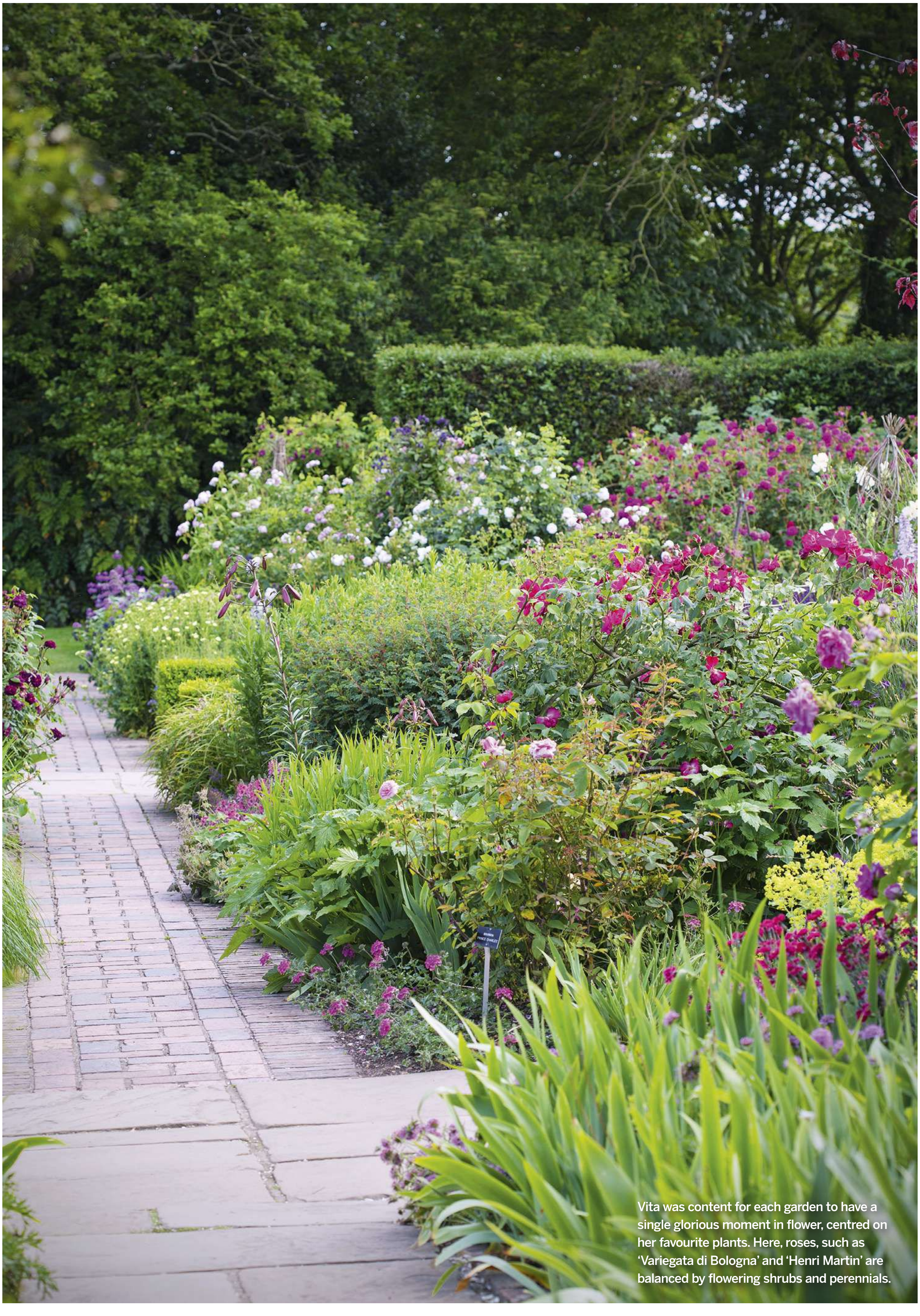
For many, Vita's name is synonymous with a passion for old roses. In a poem published in 1921, she wrote: 'My garden all is overblown with roses / My spirit all is ▷



Vita's philosophy was to plant lavishly and with concentration on the given moment and never mind that you get blanks when the moment has passed

Right The corner of the Rose Garden near the main house is dominated by a glorious mix of pinks and whites. In the foreground is the rich-pink *Rosa* 'Duc de Guiche', while the climber *R.* 'Constance Spry' lights up the wall to the right of the blue metal gate.

ROSA
COMTE DE CHAMBORD



Vita was content for each garden to have a single glorious moment in flower, centred on her favourite plants. Here, roses, such as 'Variegata di Bologna' and 'Henri Martin' are balanced by flowering shrubs and perennials.

At Long Barn Vita began to develop her planting style; theory-free, instinctive and influenced by the plants she saw on her travels

▷ overblown with rhyme.' She loved their colour, especially the dark and sumptuous roses, such as 'Tuscany' or 'Cardinal de Richelieu'. 'I think you should approach them as though they were textiles rather than flowers. The velvet vermillion of petals, the stamens of quivering gold,' she wrote in 1950 in her weekly column for the *Observer*. She loved too the romance and history of old roses, remarking later in the same column: 'Take this phrase alone: "In the twelfth century the dark red Gallic rose was cultivated by the Arabs in Spain with the tradition that it was brought from Persia in the seventh century." That is pure poetry, surely, although it comes from a serious article in a serious journal and was not intended as anything but a mere statement of fact. It should send us with a new zest in pursuit of these once neglected beauties.'

Vita's passion for roses was evident long before Sissinghurst. Shortly after her marriage to the diplomat and author Harold Nicolson, the couple created a small terrace garden sloping down to the sea near Constantinople, where a pergola of roses and grapes looped through lilacs. Two years later, in 1915, the couple bought Long Barn, near Sevenoaks in Kent [see issue 221, page 56] where they created a garden of lawns and walled terraces, and where Vita began to develop her planting style; theory-free, instinctive and influenced by the plants she saw on her travels, none more so than the rose. In 1926 she journeyed to Tehran where Harold was serving as a diplomat, and in her published account of that trip, *Passenger to Tehran*, she details the plant life she found. 'It is for the exuberance of the native wildings that one must wait before one understands the reputation of Persian roses,' she wrote. 'Huge bushes, compact, not straggling like the English dog-rose, splattered with flame coloured blossom… of a pristine simplicity.'

When she and Harold first bought Sissinghurst, a gallica rose was one of the few plants found growing among old apple and nut trees in what had once been the original Elizabethan garden (now the Orchard), something that appealed to Vita's romantic sensibilities. For Vita, gardening was never about wealth and power it was about romance, emotion and intimacy. She and Harold never set out to make a great garden for posterity, what they wanted was a refuge, a place for living in – a garden solely for their own pleasure and enjoyment.

The couple agreed entirely on what was to be the main principle of the garden – a combination of long axil walks and the more intimate surprise of small geometric gardens opening off them. 'There should be the strictest formality of design' wrote Vita, 'with the maximum informality in planting.' The existing walls more or less determined the layout of the garden and for Vita it 'cried out for a tumble of roses and honeysuckles, figs and vines'.

Vita began buying roses for Sissinghurst while she and Harold were still living at Long Barn, and the couple began to plant out a large bed of roses in what they called the Priest's House garden (now the White Garden) in 1931. Before long this rose collection had outgrown its allotted space and in 1937 they created a new Rose Garden in the larger Rondel Garden near to the main house. In that same year Vita had written: 'A collection of old roses gives a great and increasing pleasure.'

This new garden, sheltered by an existing Elizabethan courtyard wall, had started life as a kitchen garden, although the planting was never intended to be a purely productive, as a 1932 entry in Vita's garden notebook confirms: 'Put some good irises down path in kitchen garden – Plant more climbing roses on the kitchen garden wall.' Here, as in other areas, Vita's philosophy was to plant lavishly and with concentration on the given moment and never mind that you get blanks when the moment has passed. In the Rose Garden the display depends chiefly on roses, of the old-fashioned kind, although their short flowering period is extended with other flowering shrubs, along with irises, peonies, *Eremurus robustus*, figs and clematis.

Some clues to the roses Vita planted can be found in her diaries, which record ▷

Sissinghurst timeline

1560s A medieval manor house built by the Saxinghurst family is demolished by its owner, Sir Richard Baker, replacing it with a new Elizabethan house.

1756-63 During the Seven Years War, Sissinghurst becomes a prison for French sailors, who refer to the house as *le château*. After this it is known as Sissinghurst Castle.

1930 Vita Sackville-West and her husband Harold Nicolson buy Sissinghurst Castle and renovation work begins on the buildings and gardens.

1932 Vita, Harold and their two sons, Ben and Nigel, finally make Sissinghurst their main home, and the architect ARP Powys is employed to provide designs for house and gardens. The gardens as they exists today begin to take shape: the Yew Walk is planted and the axis along the future Lime Walk and Nuttery is devised. The Moat Walk is turfed and at its western end a semi-circular hedge, known as the Sissinghurst Crescent, is installed to Harold's design. A path is lain from entrance arch to the Tower, where Vita has her study. Four Irish yews are planted in the Cottage Garden, and an avenue of poplars is planted along the approach to the forecourt. Yew hedges are planted around the Rondel at the kitchen garden's centre.

1935 Improvements to living accommodation are completed. A new wall with apse, designed by Powys, is built along the western side of the kitchen garden. The Long Border path in the Front Courtyard is paved. A statue of the Virgin Mary is placed to the north of Priest's House garden.

1937 Shrub roses from the Priest's House garden are moved to the kitchen garden, renamed the Rose Garden. A Chinese jar is placed at the centre of the Priest's House garden and a Greek column from Shanganagh Castle in Dublin in the adjoining Delos. The Orchard is planted as a wild garden with a perimeter walk. The forecourt is paved and flanked by pleached limes.

1939 Jack Vass appointed head gardener. The Lion Pond in the Sunken Garden is drained to make bed. Gardens open for four days under the National Garden Scheme.

1941 Jack Vass leaves to join the Royal Air Force, and the Women's Land Army help to keep the garden running during the war. Gardens open daily throughout spring and summer for an entrance fee of 1 shilling (5p), raising £25 14s 6d (£25.72) in the first year.

continued overleaf

Head gardener Troy Scott Smith.

Pruning and training

Vita liked her roses to foam and froth in unorthodox abundance and the more professional approach adopted by the gardeners annoyed her. On one occasion she complained that Jack Vass's training of the roses made Sissinghurst, 'look like a fishing harbour'. However, the pruning and training methods Vass introduced are still used today. Whether climbers, ramblers or bushes, roses are trained in one of two ways according to need, but all to the same principle of producing a network of crossing and counter-crossing shoots. These are bent to encourage new flowering shoots to spring from the joints all along their stems. With the first method, used for the hybrid perpetuals such as *R*. 'Ulrich Brünner Fils', the long stems are tied down to curved benders of hazel pushed into the ground. For most other roses three, four or five wooden stakes are driven into the ground around each bush, and the long shoots are then trained down and round the stakes, forming a kind of cage or lattice.

"I know most roses suffer from the drawback of flowering only once during a season, but what lavishness they give, while they are about it"

▷ her purchases from, among others, Edward Bunyard, Hilda Murrell, Graham Stuart Thomas and Constance Spry. Vita's garden notebooks are another valuable source of information. One entry lists roses seen in Regent's Park, including *R*. 'Oeillet Panaché', which she describes as 'a rather washy thing – only worth having one bush'. Another entry gives details of an order to Edwin Murrell from 1951, in which she lists several roses no longer grown at Sissinghurst, including *R*. 'Omar Khayam', *R*. 'Charles Mallerin' and *R*. 'Christopher Stone'.

These diaries and notebooks, along with catalogues Vita marked with potential orders, have helped us identify many of the roses she grew, while lists left by former head gardeners have provided greater detail. Jack Vass (head gardener 1939-57) compiled a list of all the roses grown at Sissinghurst in his time, which when compared to the detailed plans prepared by Pamela Schwerdt in 1985 that showed us not only where plants had been positioned, but also which ones had been growing when she arrived in 1959, helped us to identify around 200 of Vita's roses.

In late 2013 we began the process of sourcing these missing roses. Some were available from commercial growers, such as Peter Beales, while others were harder to track down. The Historic Rose Group and Charles Quest-Ritson were both incredibly helpful, and put us in touch with specialist suppliers (see page 45). Many have now been found, but some cultivars, including 'Frühlingstag', one of Wilhelm Kordes's *R. spinosissima* hybrids; 'Gipsy Lass', a red hybrid tea rose bred by Dickson Roses in 1932; and 'Morning Stars', a 1949 rose from the American breeder Jacobus, which is something between a shrub and a rambler, are proving more elusive.

We may never find all of the lost roses, but tracking them down and discovering some new favourites has brought great pleasure. It is hard not to agree with Vita's thoughts on roses, recorded in June 1954 in her garden notebook: 'I know also that most of them suffer from the serious drawback of flowering only once during a season, but what incomparable lavishness they give, while they are about it. There is nothing scrimpy or stingy about them. They have a generosity which is as desirable in plants as in people.' □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Sissinghurst Castle, Biddenden Road, near Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AB.

Tel 01580 710700.

Website nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst-castle-garden

Troy Scott Smith will be talking about his search for Vita Sackville-West's lost roses at the *Gardens Illustrated* Festival in April. See page 8 for more details.

Sissinghurst timeline (continued)

1946 Jack Vass returns and begins to restore areas neglected during the war. A statue of Dionysus is installed in the Nuttery.

1948 Vita plants her Thyme Lawn and azaleas along the Moat Walk. She becomes a founder member of National Trust's Gardens' Committee.

1950 Priest's House garden is replanted and renamed the White Garden. The statue of the Virgin Mary is moved to beneath a weeping silver pear.

1957 Jack Vass retires and is replaced by Ronald Platt.

1959 Ronald Platt leaves and Pamela Schwerdt and Sibylle Kreutzberger are employed as joint head gardeners. Visitor numbers reach around 6,000.

1962 Vita dies at Sissinghurst Castle on 2 June, aged 70, and is buried in her family vault at Withyham (near Sevenoaks). Her younger son Nigel inherits Sissinghurst Castle.

1966 Visitor numbers reach 28,000.

1967 The National Trust takes on Sissinghurst Castle on 17 April, although the family continues to live there. Rose expert Graham Stuart Thomas is appointed as garden advisor. Box hedges in the east half of the Rose Garden are replanted. Pots from Sienna are placed along entrance range paths and down the Lime Walk. Visitor numbers reach 47,000.

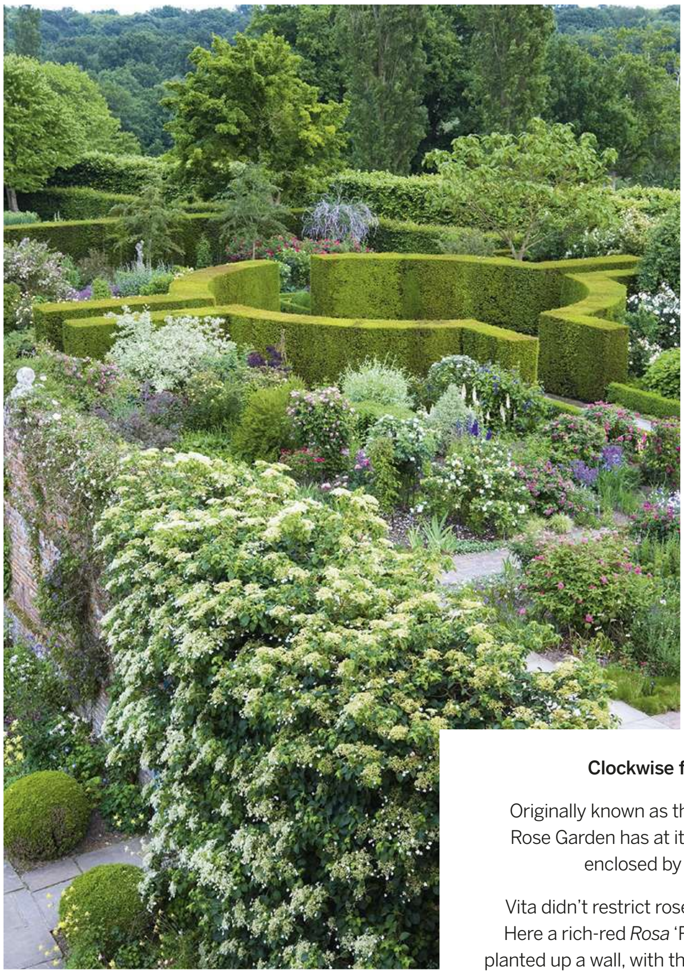
1968 Harold dies at Sissinghurst Castle on 1 May, aged 81, and is buried in Sissinghurst village. Box hedges in the west half of the Rose Garden are replanted. Paving is extended between the Moat Walk and the Orchard. Visitor numbers reach 57,000.

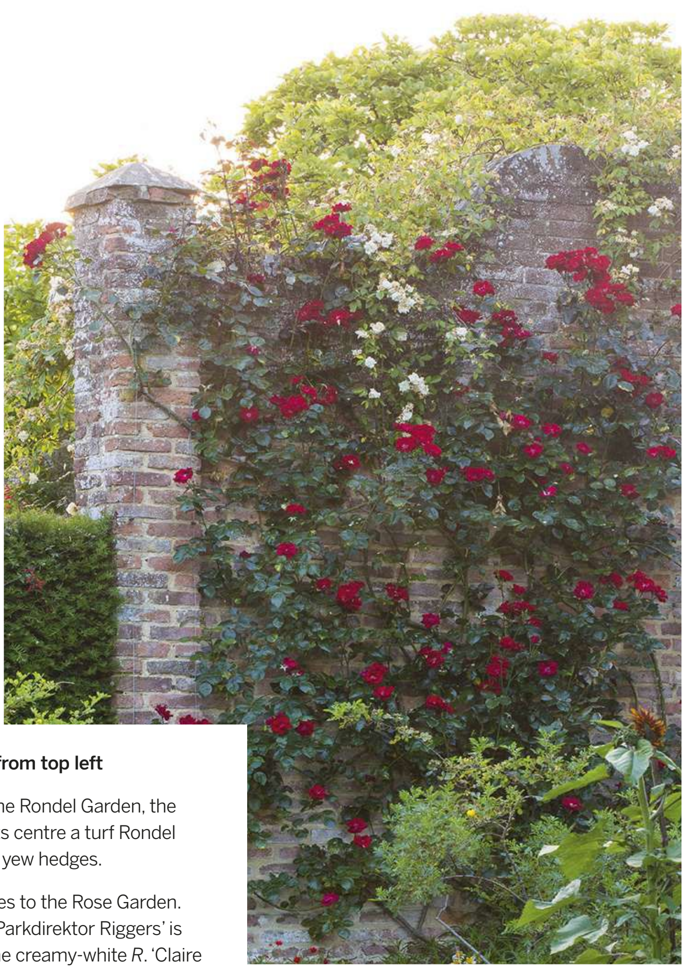
1991 Pamela and Sibylle retire and Sarah Cook takes over as head gardener. Visitor numbers reach 197,000.

2004 Sarah Cook retires, and is replaced by Alexis Datta. Nigel Nicolson dies at Sissinghurst Castle on 23 September, and is buried alongside his father. His son, Adam Nicolson, moves into Sissinghurst Castle.

2013 Troy Scott Smith is appointed head gardener on 13 April, having previously worked at Sissinghurst as a gardener (1992-1997).

2014 Dan Pearson is appointed to role of honorary garden advisor. A seven-year programme of garden renewal begins. This includes the sourcing and replanting of some of Vita's 'lost roses'.





Clockwise from top left

Originally known as the Rondel Garden, the Rose Garden has at its centre a turf Rondel enclosed by yew hedges.

Vita didn't restrict roses to the Rose Garden. Here a rich-red *Rosa* 'Parkdirektor Riggers' is planted up a wall, with the creamy-white *R*. 'Claire Jacquier' peeping over the top.

Growing up the walls of the long library is a *R. wichurana* hybrid rambler rose 'Paul Transon', its flowers harmonise perfectly with the rosy red brick.

In the White Garden, the site of Harold and Vita's original rose garden, a large *Rosa mulliganii* covers the central pergola.

IMAGES TOP LEFT AND BOTTOM RIGHT BY JONATHAN BUCKLEY

44

# of Troy's favourite roses at Sissinghurst

1 *Rosa* 'Adélaïde d'Orléans'
An ideal rambler for a pergola or trellis, with delicate flowers that hang like jewels along the length of its long, pliable stems. 4.5m. AGM[*]. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10[†].

2 *R.* 'Albertine'
A well-known rambler you often see in gardens with a delicious fragrance of tinned pineapple. Can be grown on a wall or allowed to do as it likes among shrubs. 3.6m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

3 *R.* 'Alchymist'
A modern floribunda climbing rose from the German breeder Kordes in 1956. Grown for its golden-yellow-orange blooms and striking copper-bronze foliage. 6m. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

4 *R.* 'Allen Chandler'
Grown over the entrance arch, this takes centre stage at Sissinghurst. Its brilliant scarlet-red flowers are followed by copious orange-red hips. 4.7m.

5 *R.* 'Blanche Double de Coubert'
A rose cherished by Vita, not only for the length of its flowering period but also for the power of its fragrance. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

6 *R.* 'Blanche Moreau'
An extraordinary rose with creamy-white double flowers that contrast with the purple-brown, heavily mossed stems and leaf stalks. Flowers only once. 1.8m.

7 *R.* 'Bleu Magenta'
A splendid, late-flowering rambler that can usefully extend the season. Little scent, but few thorns. 6m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

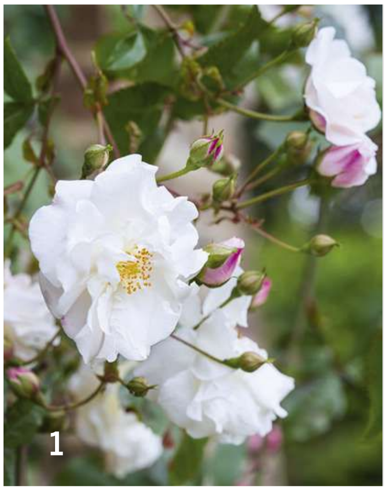
8 *R.* 'Buff Beauty'
Apricot-yellow flowers of delicious scent are beautifully presented in small clusters against the red-brown stems and bronze tinted leaves. Rarely out of flower. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 6a-10b.

9 *R.* 'Cardinal de Richelieu'
A gallica rose, much loved by Vita for its sumptuous velvet-purple colouring. 1m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

10 *R.* 'Céleste'
Flowers of delicate pink emerge from beautiful buds all set among glaucous grey leaves. Associates well with roses of rich purple. 1.8m. AGM. RHS H7.

11 *R.* 'Charles de Mills'
The crimson-purple to dark-lilac colouring is really splendid when planted with strong pink varieties. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

12 *R.* 'Complicata'
At Sissinghurst we grow this glorious gallica as both a free-standing shrub and climbing up the Elizabethan wall, and I'm also experimenting growing it in our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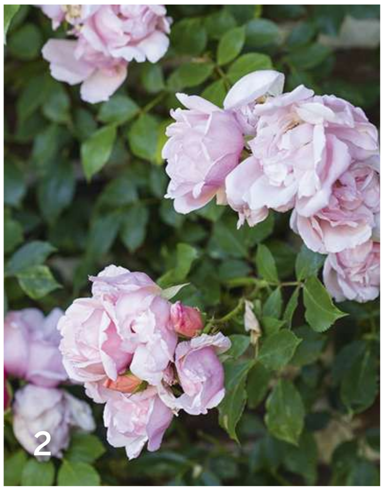
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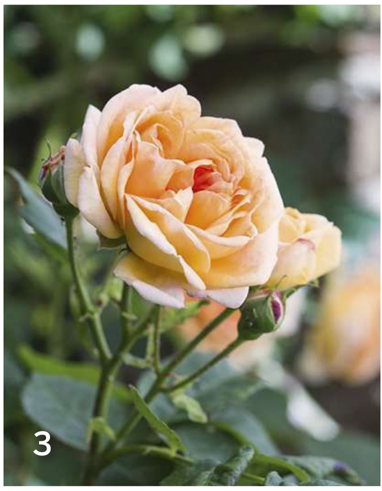
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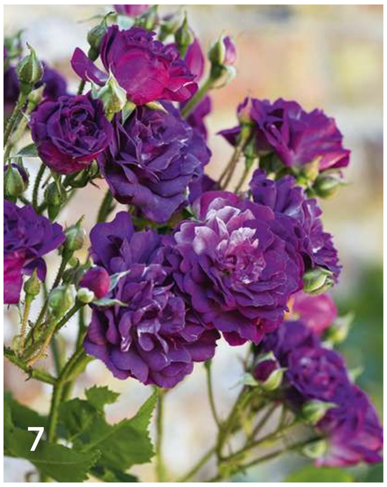
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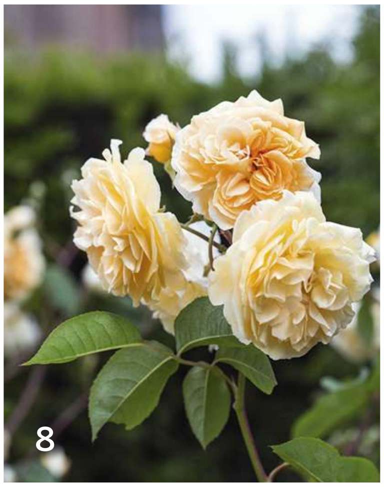
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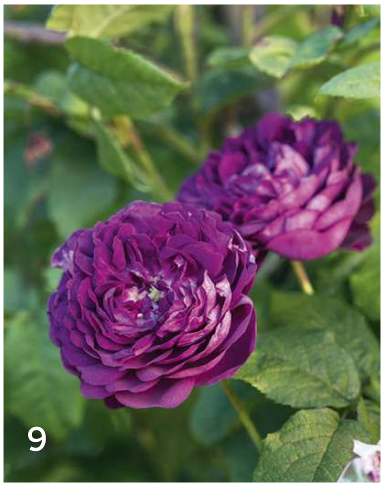
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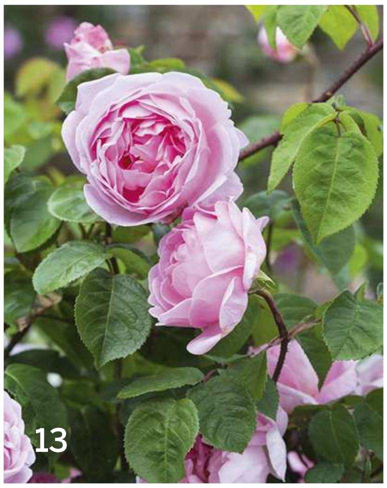
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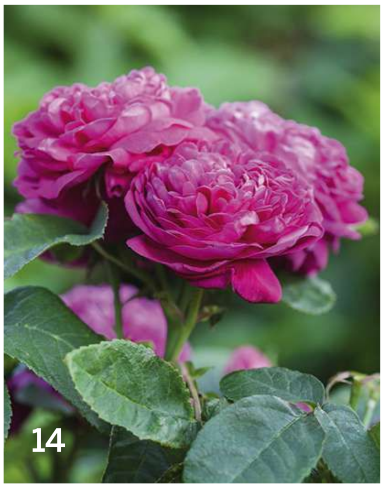
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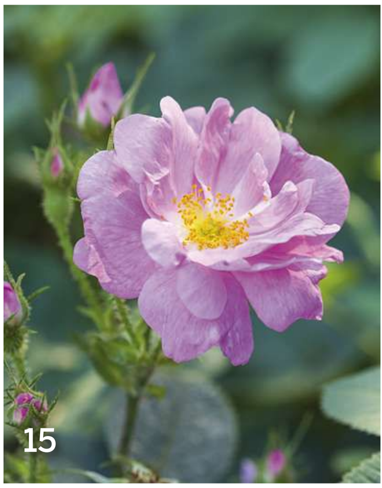
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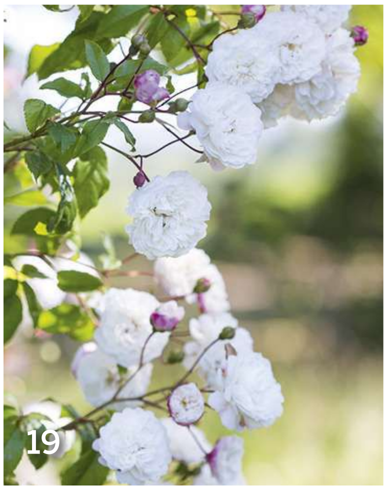
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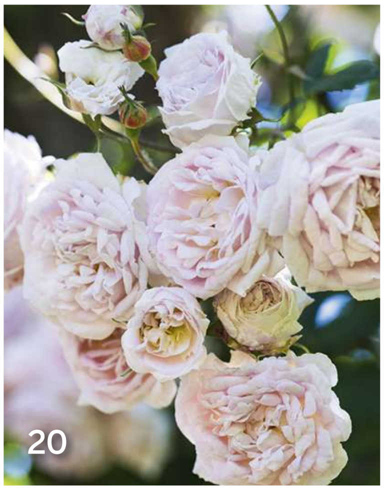
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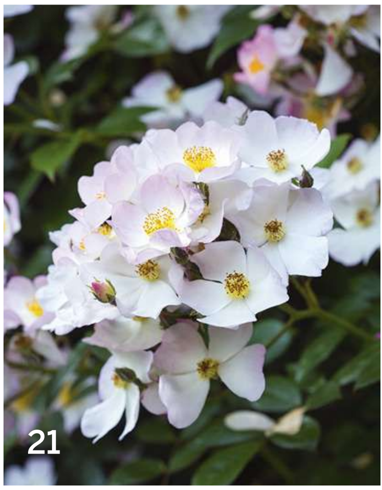
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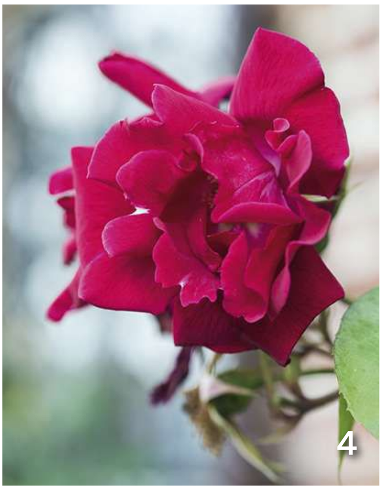

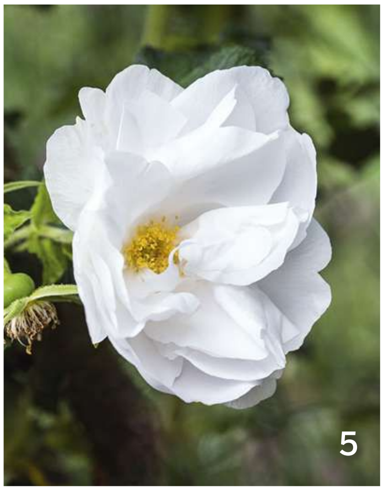

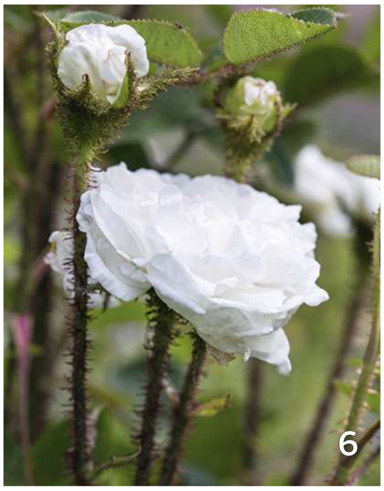

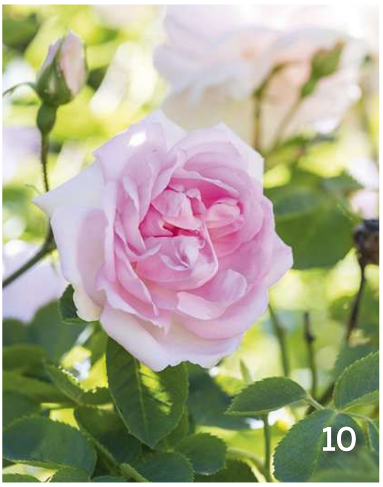

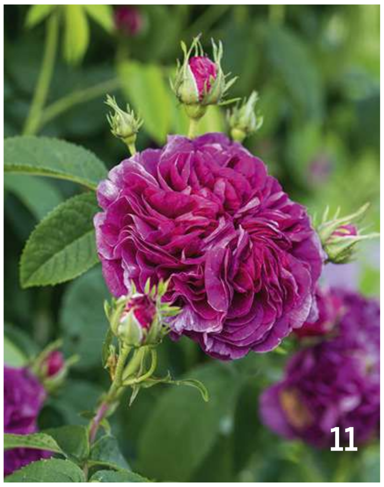

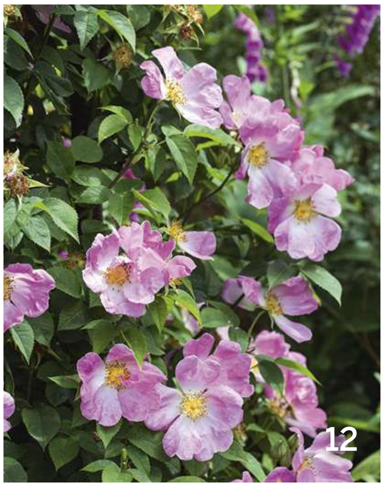

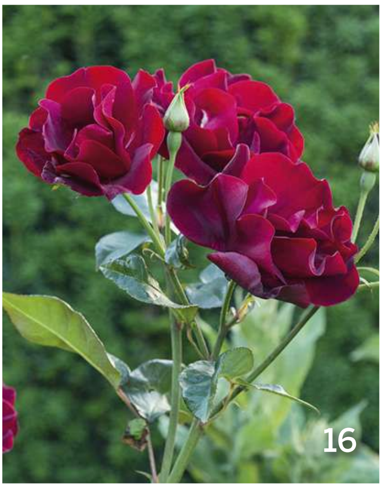

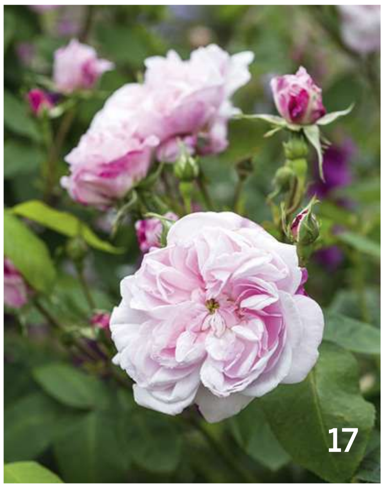

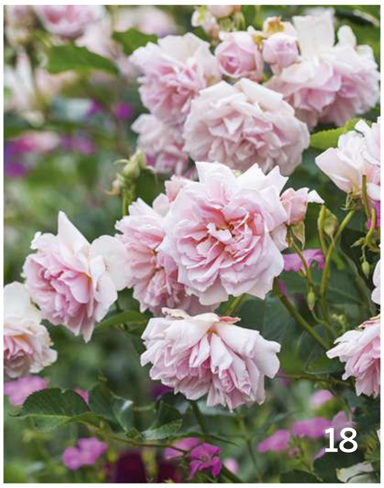

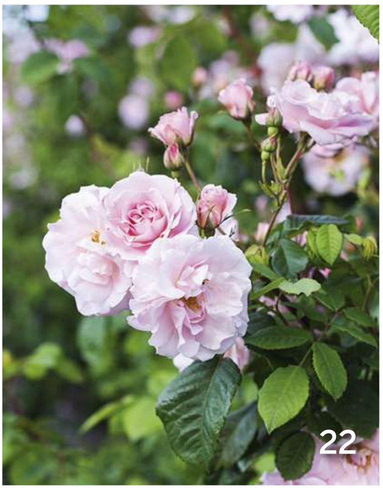

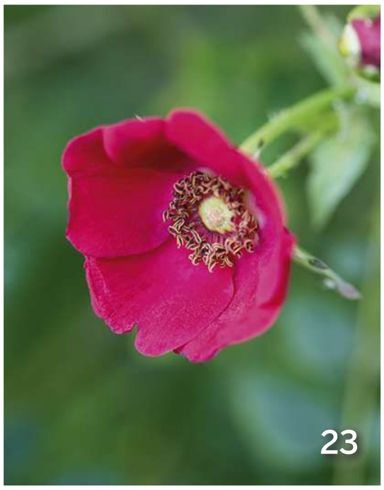

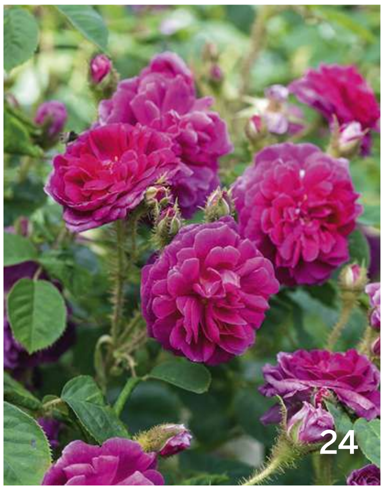

meadow. Its large, single, pink flowers surround a circle of gold stamens. 3m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

13 *R.* ‘Constance Spry’
This climber/shrub rose is named after the florist who did so much to popularise old roses. Clear-pink, double flowers are cupped at first and smell of myrrh. 2.5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.

14 *R.* ‘De Resht’
A damask/gallica rose introduced by Nancy Lindsay. Fuschia-red flowers with purple tints are abundant and are held above the foliage on short stems. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

15 *R.* ‘Duplex’
Formerly known as *R.* ‘Wolley-Dod’, this shrub rose grows in deep shade at Sissinghurst, its pink flowers contrasting beautifully with the healthy foliage. 3m.

16 *R.* ‘Dusky Maiden’
A floribunda rose worth growing for its colouring and used by Vita in the Cottage Garden at Sissinghurst. Healthy foliage is attractively tinted copper-red when young. 1.2m. USDA 6a-10b.

17 *R.* ‘Fantin-Latour’
A rose of centifolia origins has large, circular and cupped pale-pink flowers with a powerful scent. Forms a rounded bush with broad, dark-green leaves. 2.4m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

18 *R.* ‘Felicia’
Musk rose, whose flowers are pink with salmon shadings with a definite silvery finish and repeat well through the year. The foliage has a crisp, mid-green colour and is attractively crinkled at the edges. 3m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 6a-10b.

19 *R.* ‘Félicité Perpétue’
A late-flowering sempervirens rambler. We prune it very little yet it is still covered with double, creamy-white flowers, making it suitable for scrambling through a low hedge. 6m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 6a-10b.

20 *R.* ‘Flora’
The rose expert Graham Stuart Thomas suggested growing this up a wall so new growths can fall forward and cover the plant with a sheet of bloom. At Sissinghurst Vita grew it through an old apple tree. 4.5m.

21 *R.* ‘Francis E Lester’
A modern, vigorous climber of interesting colouring and an intriguing fragrance of banana and oranges. Large trusses of flowers are followed by a rash of bright-red hips lasting into winter. 6m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.

22 *R.* ‘Fritz Nobis’
A worthy, modern shrub rose from the German breeder Kordes. Soft, blush-pink flowers are followed by impressively large hips. 2.4m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

23 *R.* ‘Geranium’
Vita planted this *moyesii* hybrid in the Top Courtyard where it still thrives today. 2.4m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

24 *R.* ‘Henri Martin’
Loved by Vita for its rich colouring. The flowers are an intense crimson and are held in profusion on wiry stems. It grows well at Sissinghurst in a shady, north-facing corner of a bed. 2.4m. AGM. USDA 4a-9b.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

44 favourite roses
(continued)

25 *Rosa* 'Honorine de Brabant'
A bourbon rose with repeating, pale-pink flowers spotted and striped with darker tones of mauve to violet. Tall and healthy, but a little coarse in appearance so ideal for mid or back of the border. 2.4m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.

26 *R.* 'Ispahan'
A damask rose Graham Stuart Thomas said was the first of the old roses to open and last to finish, creating a brilliant display for the whole period. Healthy and shiny foliage and strong fragrance.
2.4m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

27 *R.* 'Kathleen'
A hybrid musk rose from the 1920s, its silvery blush-pink flowers open from apricot buds with a pronounced musk scent. Foliage is coppery when young and healthy. 2.4m. USDA 5a-10b.

28 *R.* 'Kordes' Magenta'
A modern shrub rose that somewhat resembles a musk rose. Its remarkable mauve flowers uncoil from lilac-pink buds and have cerise shadings of an antique quality seldom seen in modern roses. It's also highly scented of myrrh. 1.2m.

29 *R.* 'Madame Alfred Carrière'
The first plant put in by Harold and Vita at Sissinghurst, which still grows on the wall of the South Cottage 80 years later. White with the occasional hint of soft pink and cream. 6m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

30 *R.* 'Madame Lauriol de Barny'
This bourbon rose flowers only once in midsummer and at Sissinghurst attracts all the blackspot going. But it's worth persevering with, for its highly scented and deeply cupped, dark-pink flowers.
3m. USDA 5a-10b.

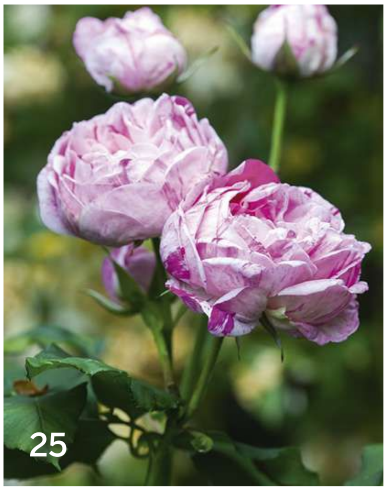
31 *R.* 'May Queen'
From the lucia group of ramblers and therefore one to encourage into flowering a second time by giving the plant a good soaking after flowering and a feed. Like *R.* 'Félicité Perpétue' this is a rose that benefits from minimal pruning. 9m.

32 *R.* 'Mrs Honey Dyson'
A quality rose with unusual soft-apricot flowers that fade to a creamy-white.
A strong, healthy plant that is happy growing through long, meadow grass in the Orchard at Sissinghurst. 3m.

33 *R.* 'Noisette Carnée'
An old rose often grown for its unmistakable rich, clove fragrance.
Flowers are borne in large clusters from rosy-red buds opening to creamy-lilac.
1.8m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 6a-10b.

34 *R.* *nutkana* 'Plena'
A shrub rose that is showered with lilac-pink flowers all along the arching branches in midsummer. Planted by Vita and still performing well.
2.5m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 6a-10b.

35 *R.* 'Penelope'
Vita planted a hedge of this musk rose at Sissinghurst. Not only does it flower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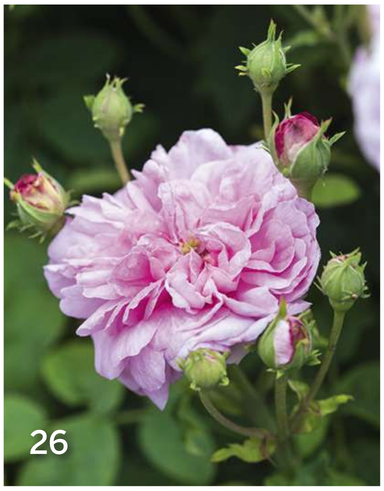
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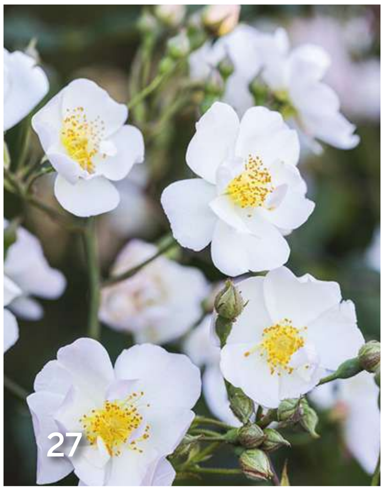
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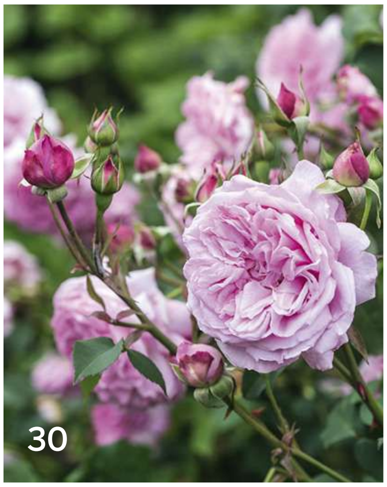
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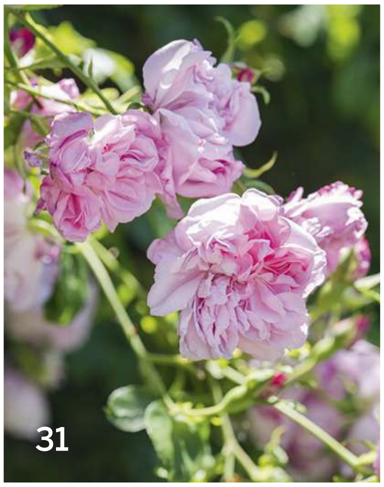
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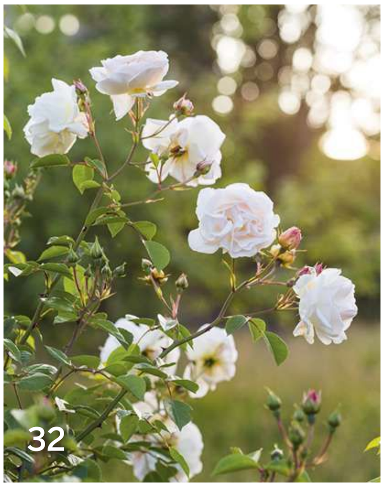
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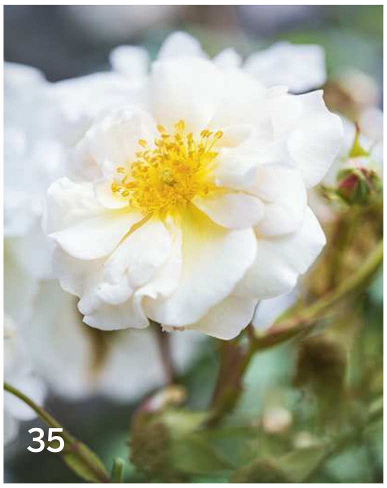
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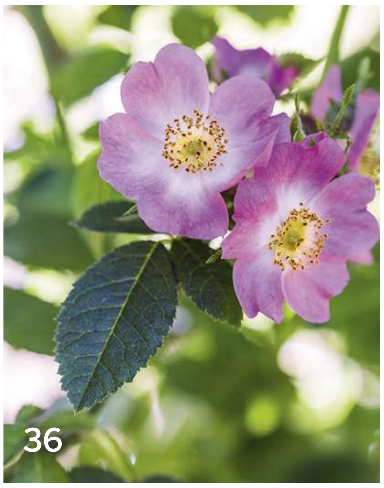
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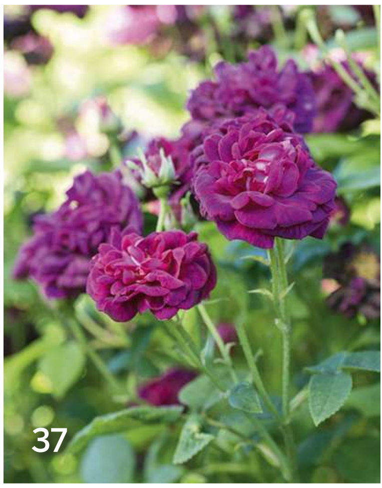
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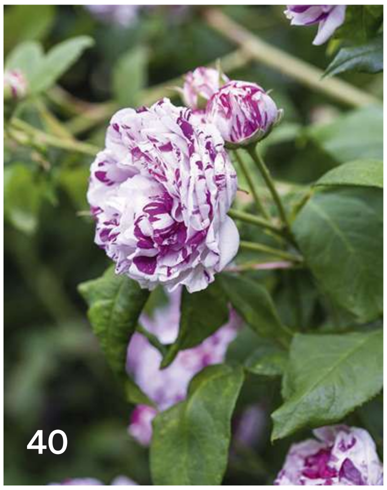
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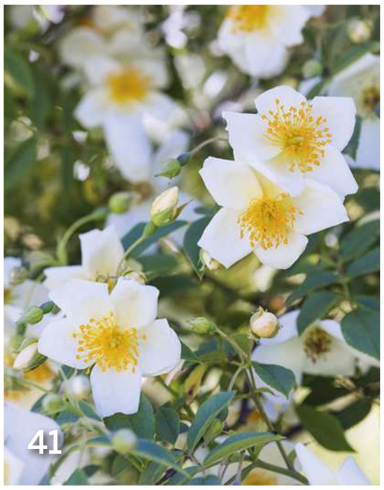
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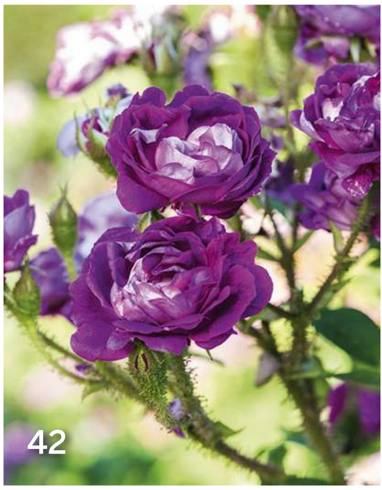
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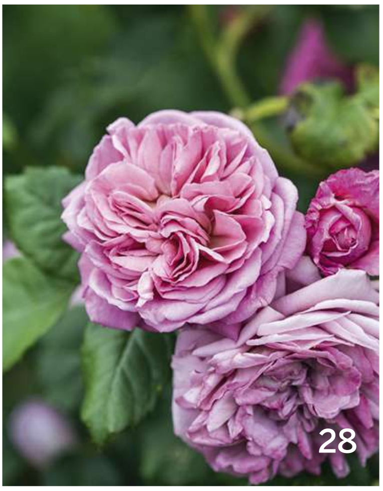
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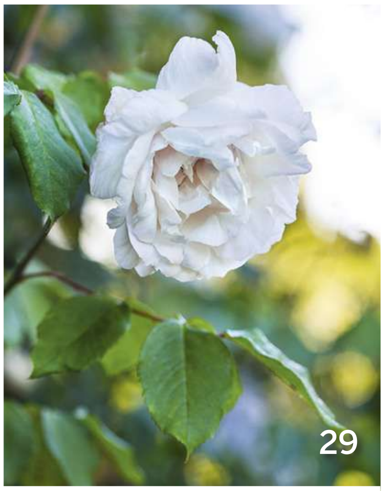
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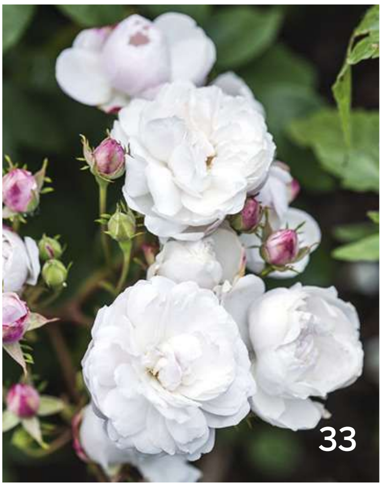
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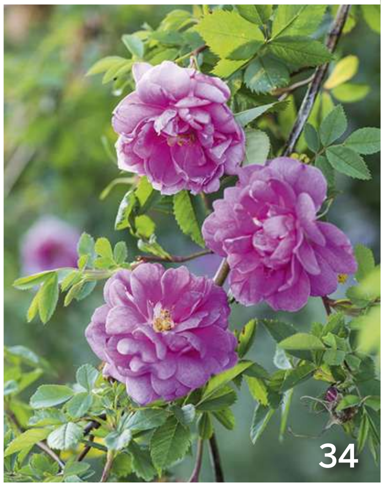
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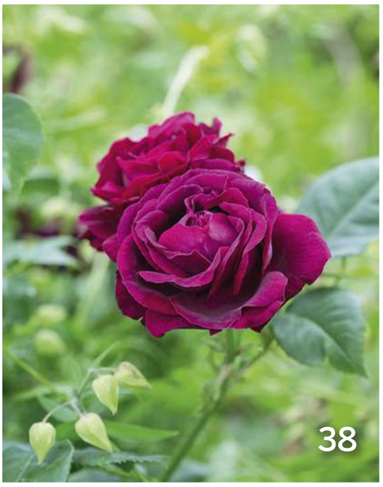
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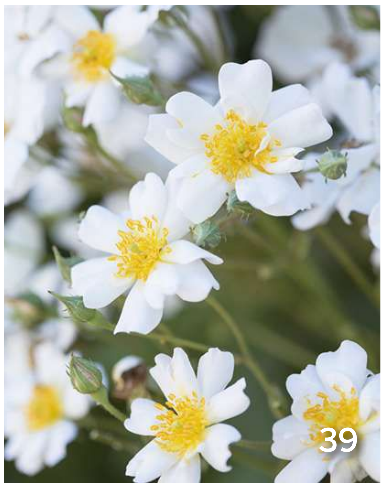
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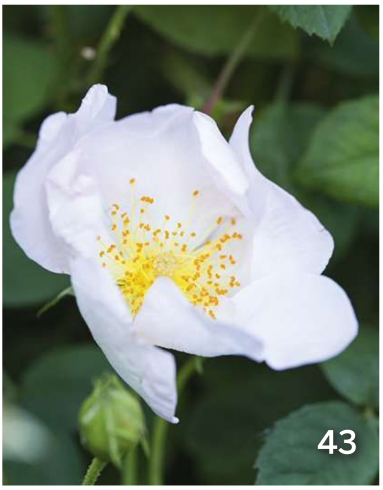
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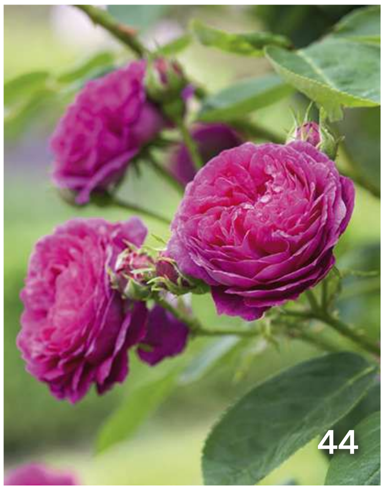
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through the summer, but later in the season it signs off by throwing up beautiful coloured foliage and hips. The scent, as with most musk roses, is strong and carried far on the air. 2.4m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-10b.

36 *R. rubiginosa*
Forms an arching shrub some 2.4m high and 1.8m wide if allowed to go unchecked. Vita planted it as a hedge near the South Cottage so the fragrance of its leaves would waft deliciously through the open door. 2.4m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

37 *R.* 'Sissinghurst Castle'
When Harold and Vita arrived at Sissinghurst, this gallica rose was growing like a weed among a few aged apple and nut trees in the Orchard. They later named it 'Sissinghurst Castle'. 1.2m.

38 *R.* 'Souvenir du Docteur Jamain'
Vita found this dark-red, sweetly scented rose growing against a wall of a rather derelict local nursery. She dug it up and brought it home, later releasing it into commerce, saying she would not be without its dusky-red flowers and exceptional scent. 3m. USDA 4b-10b.

39 *R.* 'The Garland'
In Vita's day this beautiful old rambler sprawled exuberantly through almonds in the White Garden. We've only recently replanted it at Sissinghurst, where its rich, orange scent carries well in the air from the masses of creamy-white clusters of flowers. 7m. AGM. RHS H6.

40 *R.* 'Variegata di Bologna'
A bourbon rose from 1909, which we grow alongside *R.* 'Henri Martin' (see previous page) in a slightly shady corner of the Rose Garden. Here its pale flowers, striped with purple, light up the bed and are a nice contrast to the darker, richer colours of *R.* 'Henri Martin'. 1.2m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

41 *R.* 'Wickwar'
This rambler is one of my new favourite roses, and I've now ordered more of it to plant in the Orchard. It is a healthy, vigorous rose with grey foliage and creamy-white flowers, and it has the added attraction of small, red hips in the autumn. 2m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-10b.

42 *R.* 'William Lobb'
An old velvet moss rose named after the Cornish plant collector. Its dark, crimson-purple flowers, which fade to lavender-grey, emerge from heavily green-mossed stems and buds. 3m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

43 *R.* x *polliniana*
A hybrid between *R. gallica* and *R. arvensis*, this rose with single flowers of clear rose-pink with yellow stamens, can spread to around 2.4m across. It is very useful for sprawling over mounds and tree stumps, or trailing down slopes. It also has a delicious scent. 1.2m.

44 *R.* 'Zigeunerknabe'
Vita loved this shrub rose, formerly known as 'Gipsy Boy', for its intense, crimson-purple colouring. In midsummer it's covered with blooms, which are followed by orange-red hips. 1.5m. USDA 5a-10a.

Sourcing rare roses

In our search for Vita's lost roses we owe a huge debt of thanks to both the Historic Rose Group (**historicroses.org**) and Charles Quest-Ritson.

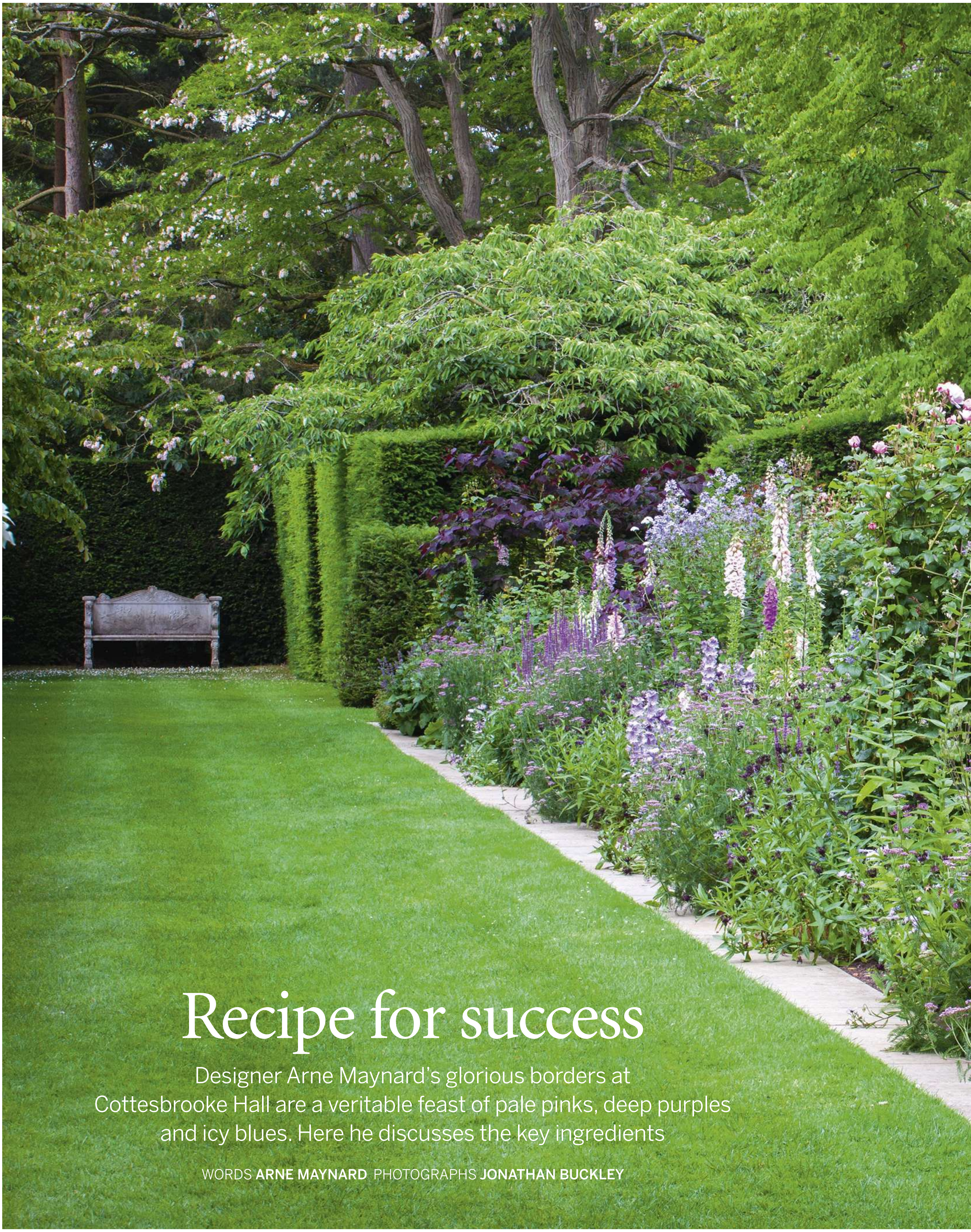
Two websites that proved extremely useful in our search for rare rose cultivars were **helpmefind.com/rose/** and **combinedroselist.com**, which publishes an annual list of around 15,000 cultivars worldwide.

Two sources suggested by Charles Quest-Ritson, were the Index Seminum of two of Europe's Botanical Gardens:

- **Jardin des Plantes de Montpellier**
  1 Boulevard Henri IV, 34000
  Montpellier, France.
  Tel +33 (0)4 34 43 36 20,
  umontpellier.fr
- **La Mortola**
  Corso Montecarlo 43, 18039
  Ventimiglia (IM), Italy.
  Tel +39 0184 229507,
  giardinihanbury.com/en

Specialist suppliers

- **David Austin Roses**
  Bowling Green Lane, Albrighton,
  Wolverhampton WV7 3HB.
  Tel 01902 376300,
  davidaustinroses.co.uk
- **Europa-Rosarium**
  Am Rosengarten 2a, 06526
  Sangerhausen, Germany.
  Tel +49 (0)3464 58980,
  europa-rosarium.de
- **Peter Beales**
  London Road, Attleborough,
  Norfolk NR17 1AY.
  Tel 01953 454707,
  classicroses.co.uk
- **Roseto Botanico Carla Fineschi**
  Casalone 76, 52022 Cavriglia
  (Arezzo), Italy.
  Tel +39 366 20 63 941,
  rosetofineschi.it
- **Ruston's Roses**
  Moorna Street, Renmark,
  SA 5341, Australia.
  Tel +61 (0)8 8586 6191,
  rustonsroses.com

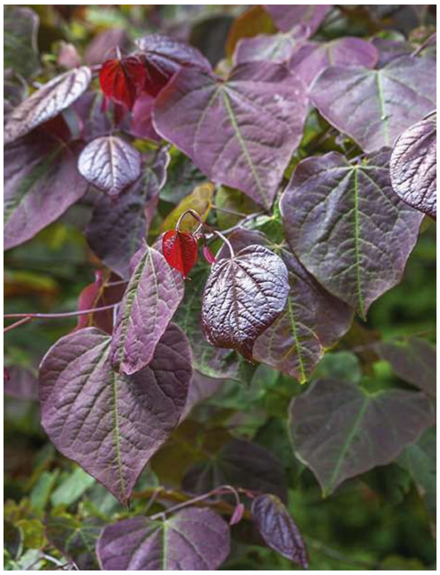


Recipe for success

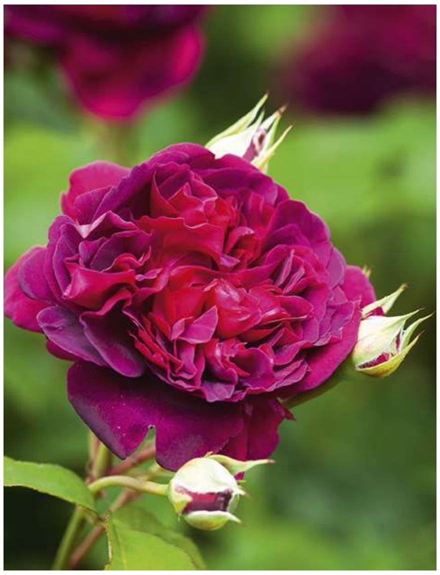
Designer Arne Maynard's glorious borders at Cottesbrooke Hall are a veritable feast of pale pinks, deep purples and icy blues. Here he discusses the key ingredients

WORDS **ARNE MAYNARD** PHOTOGRAPHS **JONATHAN BUCKLEY**

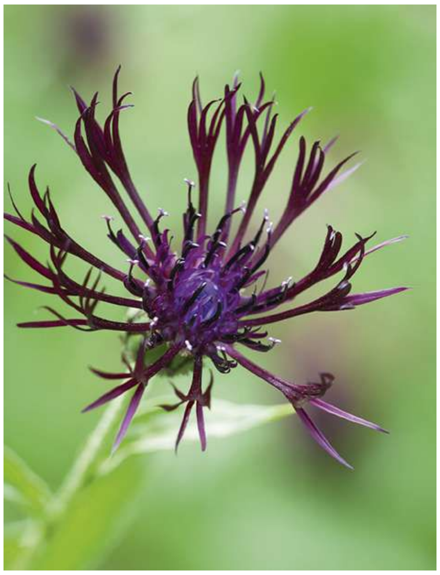
Dark undertones



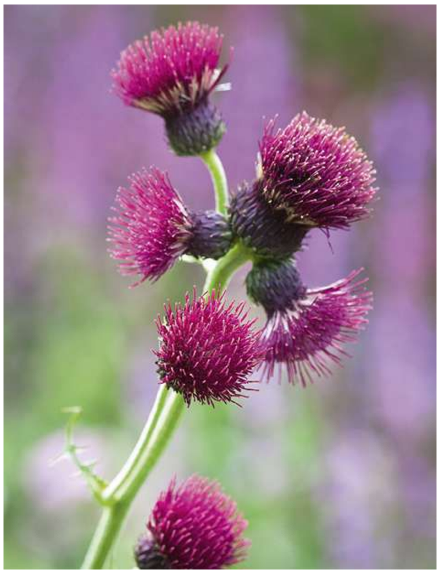
Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy'
Small, ornamental tree with deep-pink flowers in spring, and purple, heart-shaped leaves in summer. Works well with blues and pinks. 10m. AGM*. RHS H5, USDA 4a-9b†.



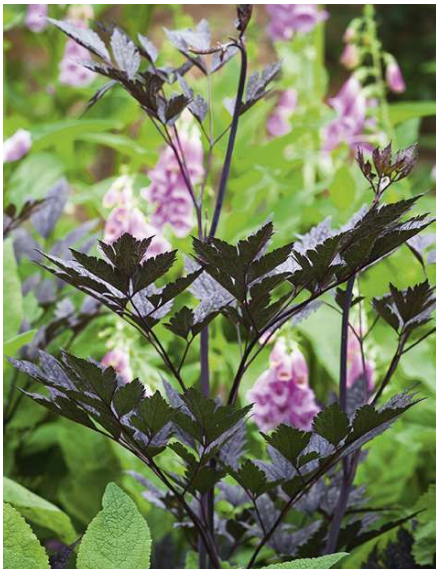
Rosa William Shakespeare 2000 (='Ausromeo')
Medium-sized shrub rose by David Austin, flowering rich crimson, deepening purple, with a strong fragrance. 1.2m. USDA 5b-9b.



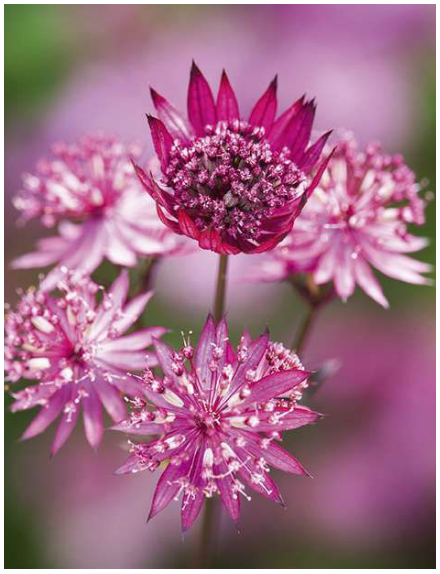
Centaurea 'Jordy'
Self-seeding with dark-plum-purple flowers. Best divided every three years. Cut back after flowering for a second flush and deadhead regularly. 45cm. USDA 4a-8b.



Cirsium rivulare 'Atropurpureum'
Sterile, non-invasive plant with deep-crimson, thistle-like flowers on tall, erect stems. Floriferous and self-supporting, prefers damp fertile soil. 1.2m. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.



Actaea simplex 'Pink Spike'
Sometimes still labelled as *Cimicifuga*, this architectural plant has burgundy leaves and spires of fragrant pink and white flowers. All parts poisonous. 1.2m. RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

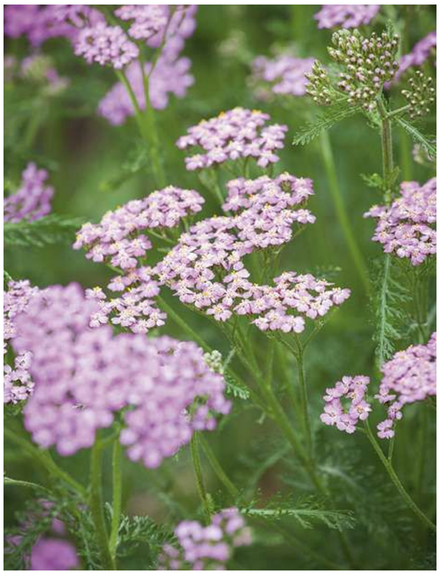


Astrantia major 'Ruby Wedding'
Deep, ruby-red flowers on maroon stems, it often brings on a second flush of flowers in autumn. An excellent filler plant. 90cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.

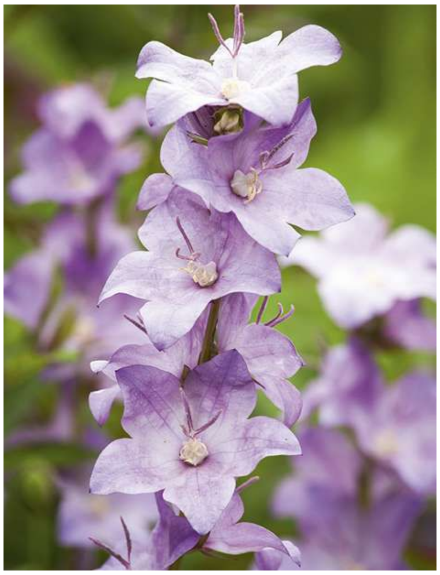
Borders can be dark and dramatic, or airy and light, rich and bold, sweet or tart, sometimes brooding or energetic, uplifting or peaceful. Identifying the mood is the starting point of a plan, bearing in mind that it's more than just the colour combinations that create the look; it's the shape of the leaves or petals, the number of different plants, the repetition of the same varieties; even personal and historic associations that plants have can affect the overall atmosphere of the border. A confident elegance was needed for this border at Cottesbrooke Hall, a pale slice of the colour wheel at the point of pinks, purples and icy blues, given depth by dark aubergine undertones. It's restrained without being self-consciously monotone. If it had been too rich it would have shouted 'look at me' when it needed to complement the bigger picture of the statue walk. Too pale and it would have fizzled away, much too shy for its setting. The palette of plants began with dark plums and rich pinks, an undercoat that brings vivacity to the paler colours that dominate.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where known.

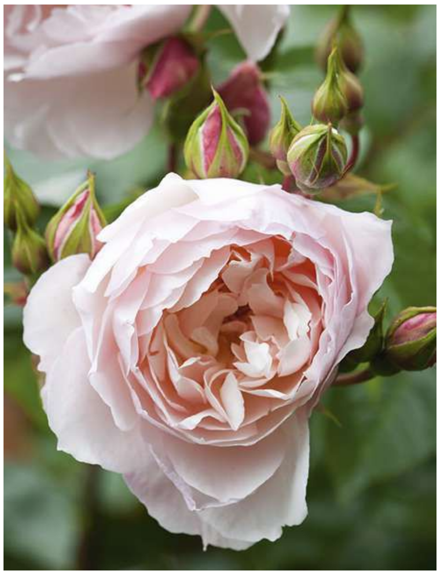
Soft and sweet centre



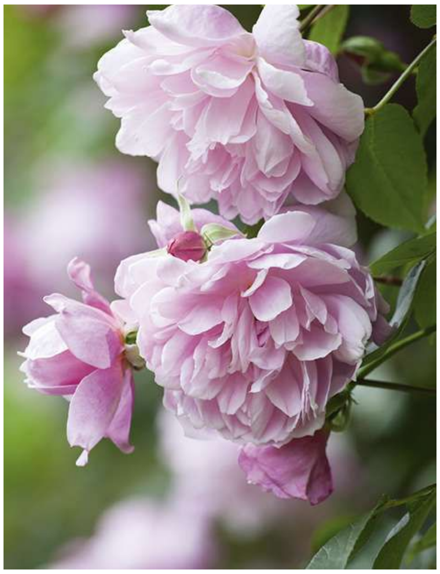
Achillea millefolium **'Lilac Beauty'**
Rosy-lilac flowers on wiry stems with ferny, grey-green foliage that softens a scheme and helps link plants. Cut back after first flowering for second flush. 80cm. USDA 3a-9b.



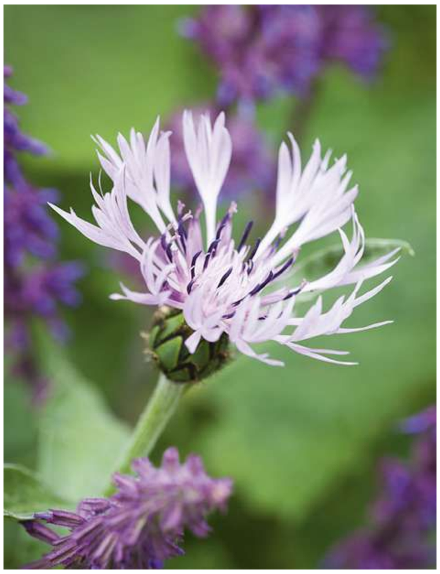
Campanula latiloba **'Hidcote Amethyst'**
Upright stems studded with outward-facing, large-cupped, dusky lilac-pink flowers. Clumps increase quickly thanks to spreading rosettes. 1m. RHS H7, USDA 5a-7b.



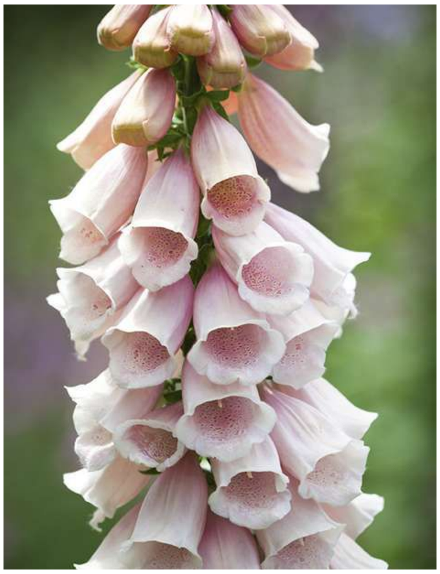
Rosa **The Generous Gardener (='Ausdrawn')**
Lovely climbing rose from David Austin, with a strong and delicious fragrance. Extremely healthy. 4.5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.



Rosa **Mortimer Sackler (='Ausorts')**
Tall shrub or short climber rose from David Austin. A repeat flowerer that is extremely healthy with a strong scent and very few thorns. 3.6m. AGM. USDA 5a-10a.



Centaurea montana **'Carnea'**
Not quite as long flowering as 'Jordy' but more compact with neater foliage. Attractive to bees. Deadheading will extend the flowering period. 45cm. USDA 4a-8b.



Digitalis purpurea **'Sutton's Apricot'**
Much-prized apricot strain of our native foxglove. Flowers will fade with age to a soft pastel shade of apricot. Very attractive to bees. 1-2m. AGM. RHS H7.

Planning a border is a little like organising a meal – ingredients are combined to create dishes that deliver a fulfilling feast. Instead of flavours, it is colours and textures that are being mixed together but it's useful to think of the need for spice and piquancy to enhance the taste, or milk and yoghurt to diminish the fire.

The heart of this planting at Cottesbrooke Hall is soft and sweet, dominated in June by *Digitalis purpurea* 'Sutton's Apricot' weaving its pinky-apricot way through the long expanse of the border. Its shade is matched by *Rosa* The Generous Gardener (='Ausdrawn') trained on dome-shaped frames, which has the presence to divide up the space.

Unlike the meal, this is a dynamic feast that is continually changing. For example, *Papaver orientale* 'Ruffled Patty' will suddenly appear and strut glamorously through the border, catching all the attention like some 18th-century Cinderella, clad in a pink satin ball gown and flashing a thickly lashed, dark eye, before leaving the scene as suddenly as she appeared. ▷

Light catchers and top notes

***Wisteria floribunda* 'Alba'**
Fragrant, white Japanese wisteria. Prune to encourage a second flush of flowers. A great backdrop, leading the eye upwards and softening the wall. 9m. RHS H5, USDA 4a-9a.

***Geranium pratense* 'Mrs Kendall Clark'**
This meadow cranesbill is very floriferous, producing pearl-blue flowers. Vigorous growth; it is an excellent filler plant. Self-seeds freely. 75cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

***Erigeron* 'Quakeress'**
A fleabane with large, pale, lilac-pink flowers. It is both vigorous and easy to grow, and extremely floriforious. Also attractive to pollinators. 60cm. USDA 3a-11.

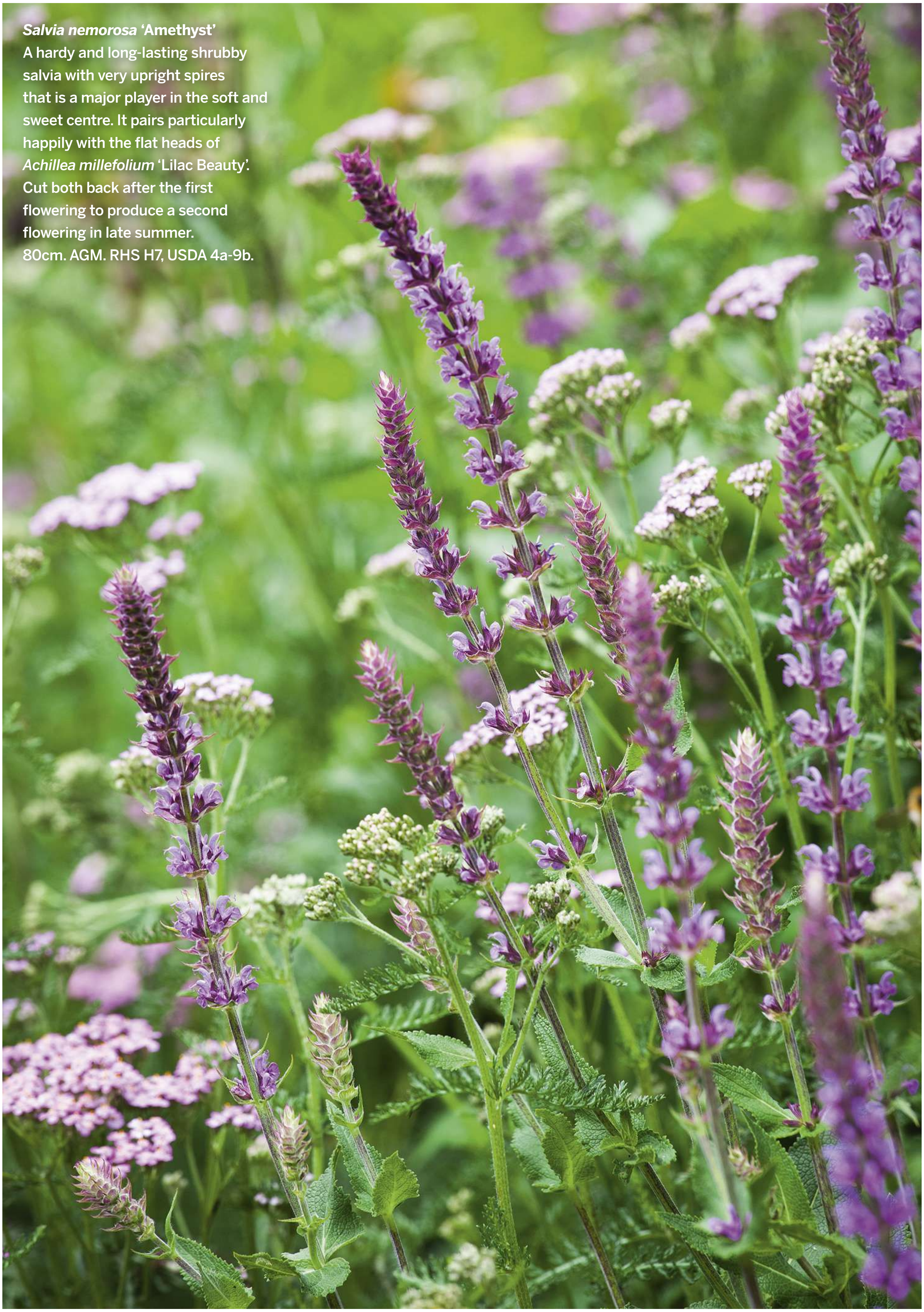
***Nepeta subsessilis* 'Washfield'**
Catmint with dramatic flower heads that stand well into autumn thanks to purple calyces. Upright and sturdy with green leaves that turn slightly purple. 90cm. USDA 3a-7b.

Valeriana officinalis
Common valerian is a tall, attractive plant with pinnate foliage and clusters of fragrant, white flowers. Self-seeds freely. 1.2-2m. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.

***Campanula lactiflora* 'Prichard's Variety'**
Cottage garden classic with large clusters of violet, star-shaped flowers on branching stems. Combines well with old-fashioned roses. 75cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-9a.

▷ An infinite number of possible plant combinations exist, but every border has growing conditions that narrow the choice and a setting that is specific to its site. At Cottesbrooke Hall, mellow brick walls provide a sheltered backdrop in a very verdant enclosure of yew hedges and bowling-green grass, all surrounded by mature trees. The dark-plum base notes are a great contrast to the greens, but in this setting we also need highlights and top notes to lift the border. Whites and cool blues bring the right amount of luminosity even on a gloomy day. When the sun does shine, the way they catch the light can be utterly breathtaking.

The existing wisteria on the back wall performs the light-catching role particularly well. The long, white racemes hover above the border, resonating with the soft grey-white of *Valeriana officinalis* below. Clear whites are harder to use, and often a pearly-grey blue, such as that of *Geranium pratense* 'Mrs Kendall Clark', will bring an equal luminescence and is an easier transition colour in a mixed border. □



***Salvia nemorosa* 'Amethyst'**
A hardy and long-lasting shrubby salvia with very upright spires that is a major player in the soft and sweet centre. It pairs particularly happily with the flat heads of *Achillea millefolium* 'Lilac Beauty'. Cut both back after the first flowering to produce a second flowering in late summer.
80cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

Beautiful bouquets

The secret of a stunning cut-flower display is all in the mix, so we asked florist and plantswoman Anne Townley to suggest four combinations to grow for the ultimate bouquets

WORDS CHARLIE RYRIE
PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Pink perfection

1 *Lathyrus latifolius* 'Rosa Perle' Looks glorious as a massed trailing component in displays. Should stay looking fresh in the vase for around a week. 2m.

2 *Stachys officinalis* Related to lamb's ears but more useful. Keep cutting the pretty pink flowers to encourage long flowering throughout summer. 50cm.

3 *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Fascination' Easier to grow and quicker to bulk up than other veronicas, but just as useful in the vase. 1.8m.

4 *Monarda* 'Prärienacht' Pick the flowers of this bergamot when just opening for longest vase life and keep cutting them from July to late September. 1m.

5 *Hordeum jubatum* Short-lived perennial grass, which adds a lovely texture to bouquets and is also beautiful dried. 70cm.

6 *Anemone hupehensis* Take out the centre flower of each group and pick the flower head when opening. Or wait until the main flower in a group has died when the stem is beginning to dry. 75cm.

7 *Rubus idaeus* On the cusp of ripeness, raspberries add interesting texture to an arrangement. 2.5m.

8 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Magnus' Coneflowers and related perennial rudbeckias last well when cut and the seedheads can add impact at season's end. 1m.

9 *Euphorbia stricta* A wonderful spreading annual with dazzling chartreuse flowers and red stems. Leave all spurges in water overnight before mixing with other flowers to wash out their milky sap. 50cm.

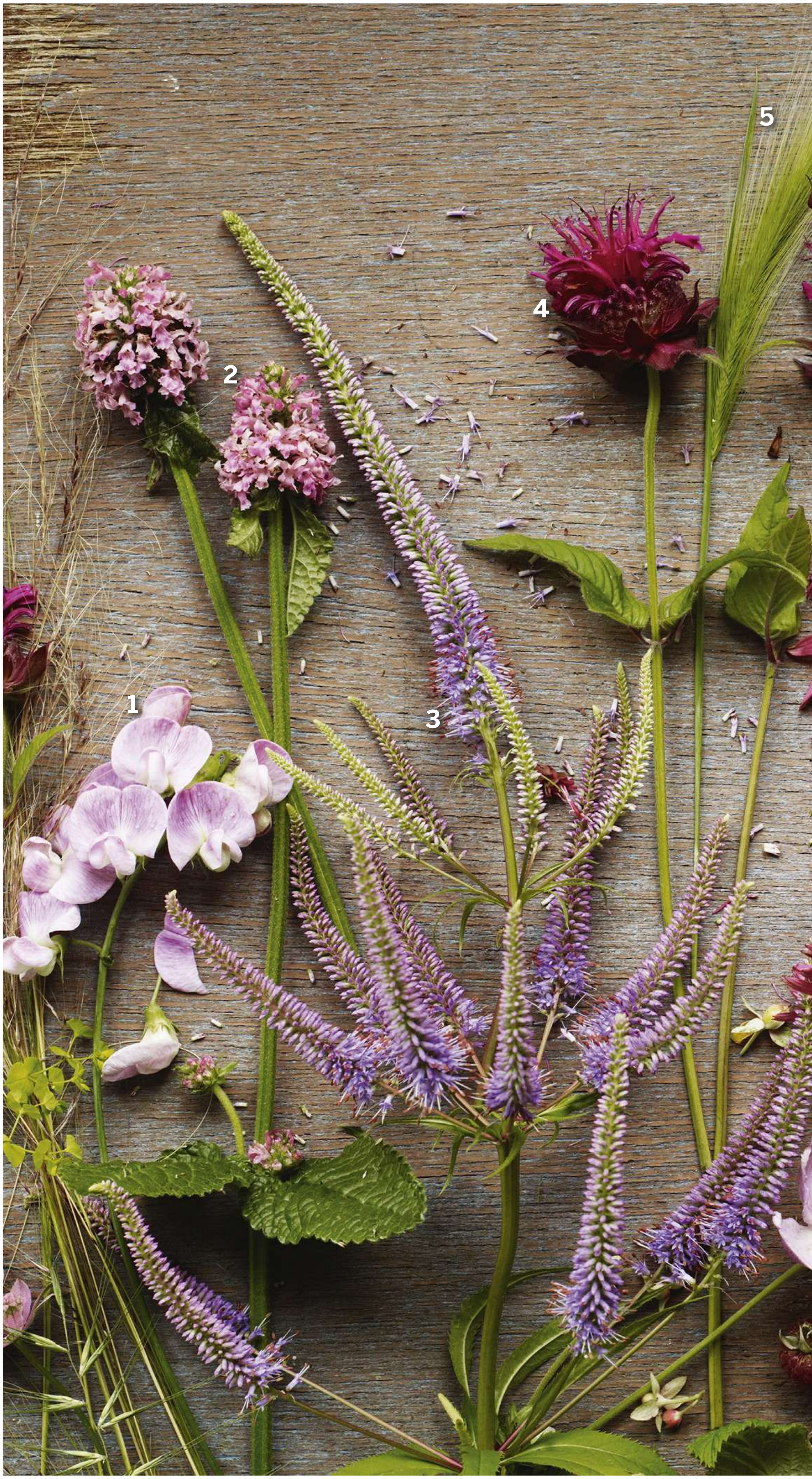
10 *Agrostemma githago* 'Milas Snow Queen' This white form of the self-seeding annual looks wonderful viewed close up with its gold-brushed stamens on delicate, black-veined, white flowers. 90cm.

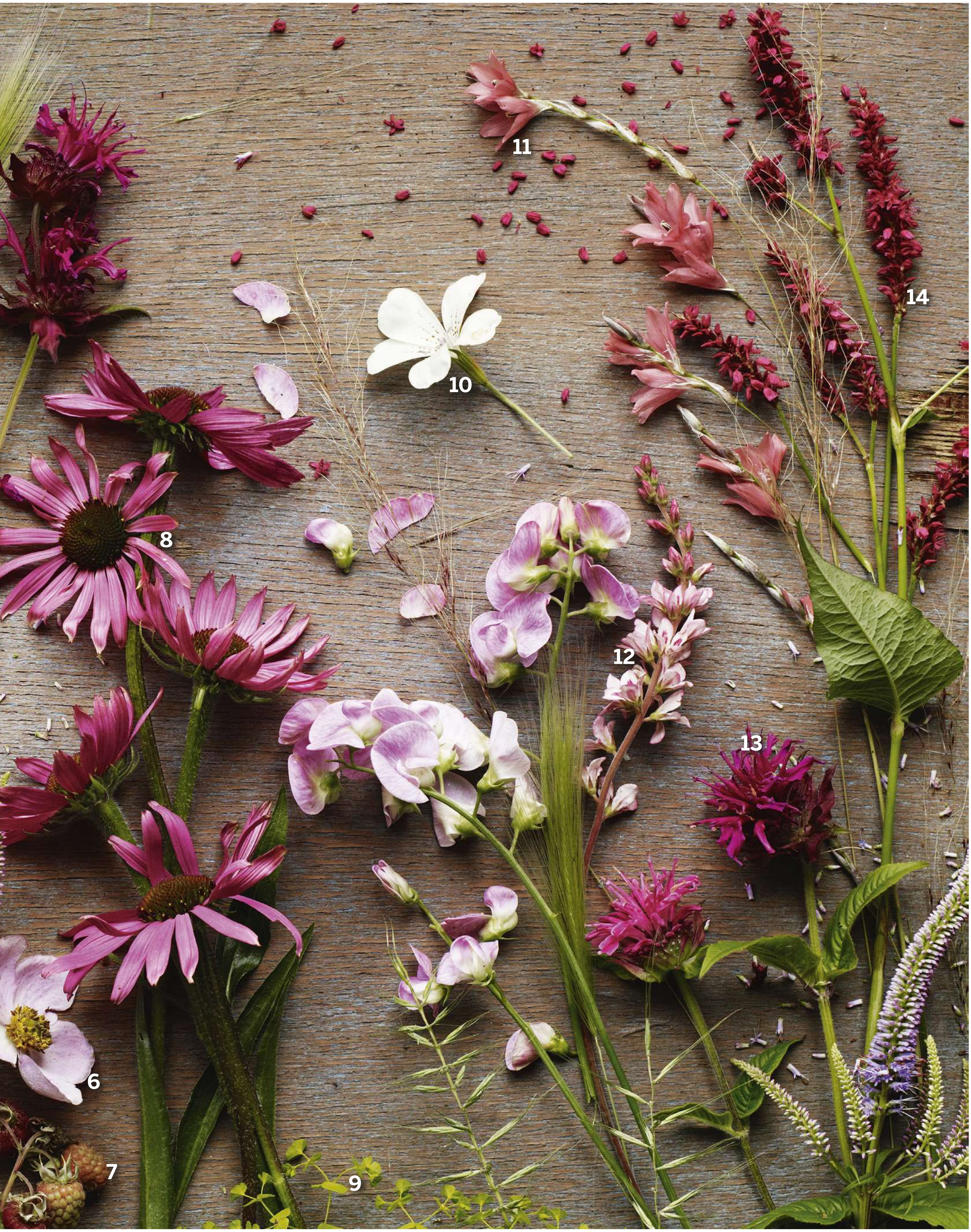
11 *Dierama igneum* Grass-like stems and pretty flowers. Stunning in a vase on its own. 60cm.

12 *Francoa sonchifolia* Easy-to-grow perennial with impressive pink-white spires. The seedheads can add texture to winter arrangements. 90cm.

13 *Monarda* 'Croftway Pink' Another excellent, bright-pink, bergamot for arrangements. 80cm.

14 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* Such a useful perennial, providing strong colour and shape in late season. Adds a touch of cheerful wildness to any bunch. 1m.

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Golden glow

1 *Helenium* 'Sahin's Early Flowerer' Bronze, yellow and orange flowers, which bloom for months, especially if you give these perennial plants the Chelsea chop. 1.2m.

2 *Stipa gigantea* This hardy, majestic perennial grass shimmers in the garden in late summer. It is wonderful on its own in a vase or as a companion for bronzes and yellows. 2m. AGM*.

3 *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' Give 'Lucifer' room and it will bulk up in a couple of years to a generous clump. Very striking fresh in arrangements and the elegant seedheads are particular favourites. 1.2m

4 *Prunus cerasus* Morello cherries add a decorative extra in flower displays. The cherries last perfectly well out of water for a couple of weeks. 4.5m.

5 *Helianthus annuus* Smaller sunflowers with subtle colours are generally easier to place in a vase than the more traditional, tall, bright-yellow forms. They last for weeks when cut. 1m.

6 *Lysimachia ciliata* 'Firecracker' Spreading, ground-covering perennial that is most useful for picking in late spring for its glossy, maroon foliage. Later, the contrast of yellow highlights against the dark foliage is also a winner. 1.2m. AGM.

7 *Dahlia* Possibly the most useful flowers in the late summer garden, there are dahlias for every occasion but multi-petalled forms tend to last longer in the vase than single dahlias. This unknown form grows as a seedling in Anne's garden. 60cm.

8 *Nigella damascena* seedpods. Green when fresh, turning bronze-red, golden and brown as they age, with horned and rounded forms. 45cm.

9 *Stipa tenuissima* Another useful perennial grass with fluffy, silver-green plumes in late summer that add movement to any bouquet. 60cm.

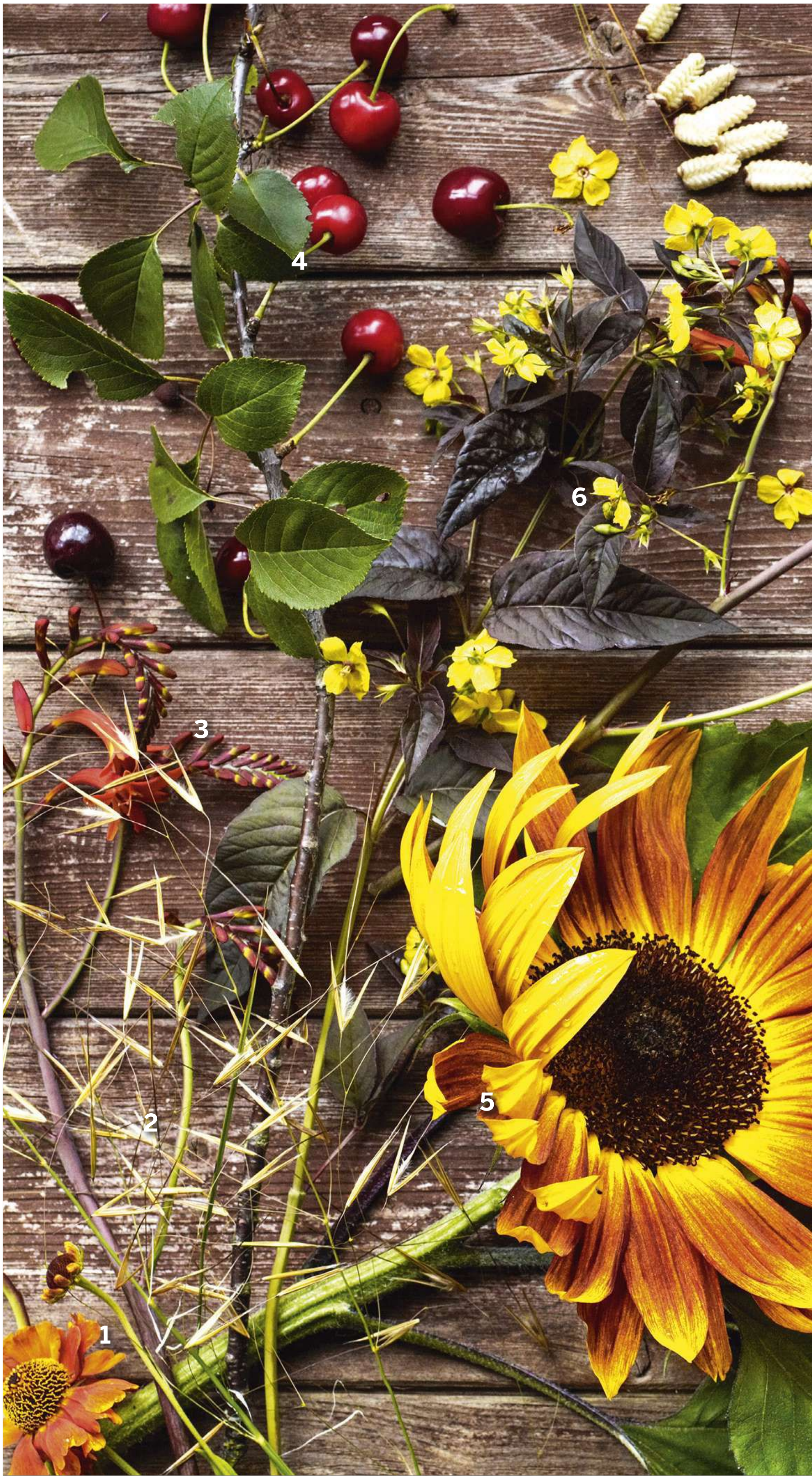
10 *Dahlia* 'Karma Naomi' A cultivar bred for cutting so generally lasts very well in the vase. Many Karma strains have dark stems, all have strong heads. 1m.

11 *Calendula officinalis* A few annual calendulas brighten up any bunch. Yellow forms tend to be more useful than orange, but don't let too many seed or they can quickly become rampant. 50cm.

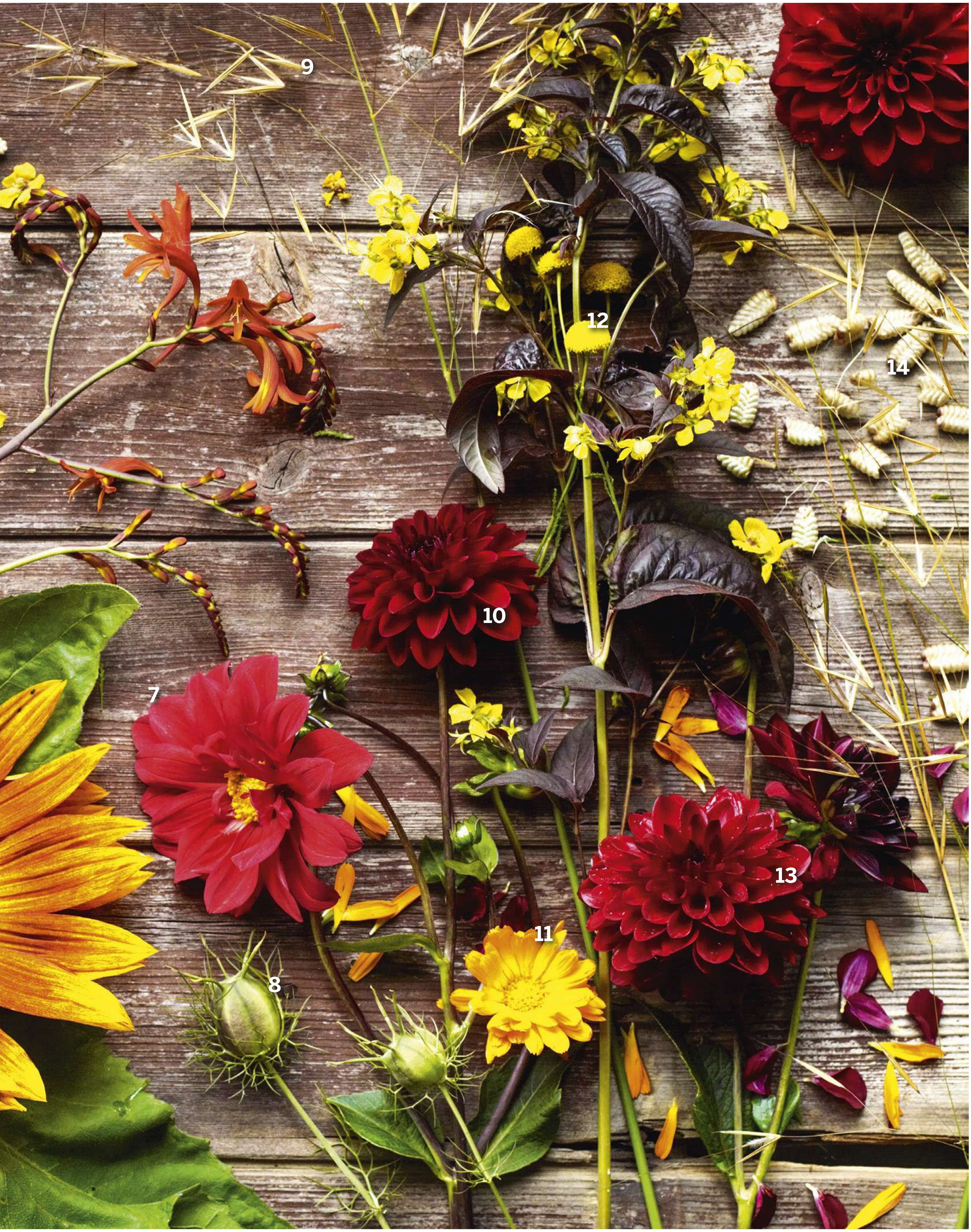
12 *Santolina virens* Bright-yellow, button flowers above silvery-green, serrated foliage are perfect for buttonholes and posies. But be careful, as their slightly strange smell is not to everyone's taste. 60cm.

13 *Dahlia* 'Arabian Night' Another excellent dahlia for cutting that is stunning in a large vase on its own or as a focal point in bouquets. Best cut before flowers are fully opened. 1.2m.

14 *Briza maxima* The seedheads are delightful, like nodding insects. This half-hardy annual self-seeds vigorously so take care where you plant it or you'll be forever trying to remove it. 60cm.



*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.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White delight

1 *Cynara cardunculus* This statuesque perennial makes a strong statement at the back of a border and the purplish flowering heads are excellent fresh or dried. Best offset with plenty of foliage. 1.5m. AGM.

2 *Dahlia* 'Snowflake' One of the easiest white dahlias to mix with other blooms. Pick when they are just opening as they tend to brown as they age. 80cm.

3 *Euphorbia cornigera* Handsome perennial in flower from May to August with vivid yellow-green flowers and veined white leaves, a brilliant filler. 1m. AGM.

4 *Ammi majus* A justly popular addition to any cutting garden. Grow close together for shorter stems and smaller heads, or space 25cm apart for taller statuesque plants. 1.2m.

5 *Hordeum jubatum* (see page 52).

6 *Delphinium consolida* 'White King' Pick larkspur as the heads are just opening for longest vase life, the individual spurs are useful in small arrangements and the main stems in large displays. A good alternative to slower bulking delphiniums. 1.2m.

7 *Nicotiana affinis* Perhaps the most striking of the tobacco plant family with generous white heads so useful for large, late-summer displays and divine evening scent in the garden. 1m.

8 *Nigella damascena* 'Miss Jekyll White' This white nigella is a sophisticated alternative to more common blues and pinks, and in late summer and autumn the flowers mix well with the seedheads. 60cm. AGM.

9 *Romneya coulteri* As magnificent in the vase as the garden. If picked in bud it lasts for a week in the vase; if picked in full flower the petals drop to leave glorious yellow centres. It can spread extravagantly so best give it space. 2.5m. AGM.

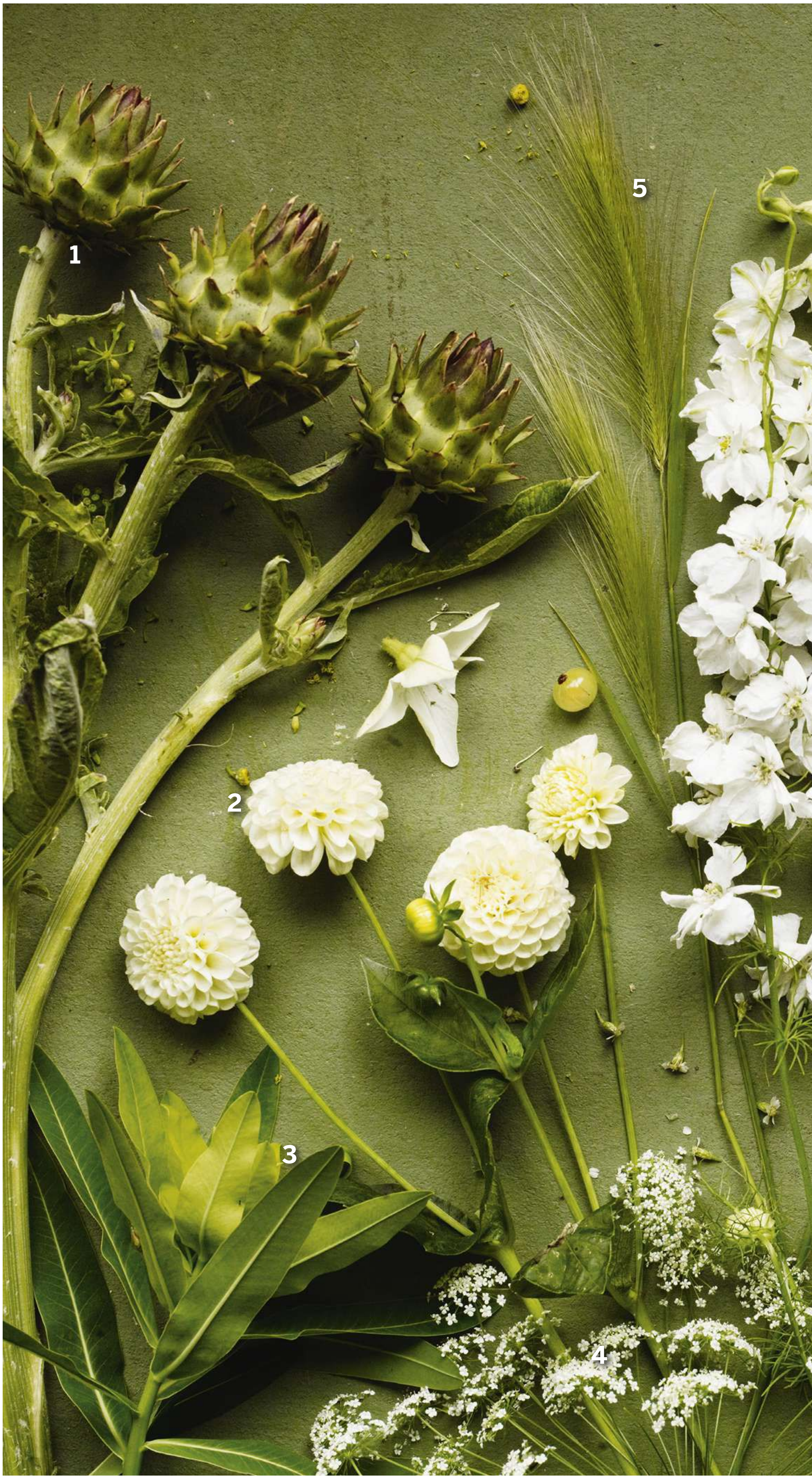
10 *Ribes rubrum* 'Versailles Blanche' Trusses are long and strong, and the plant crops heavily so there are always plenty for vases as well as to eat. 1.5m.

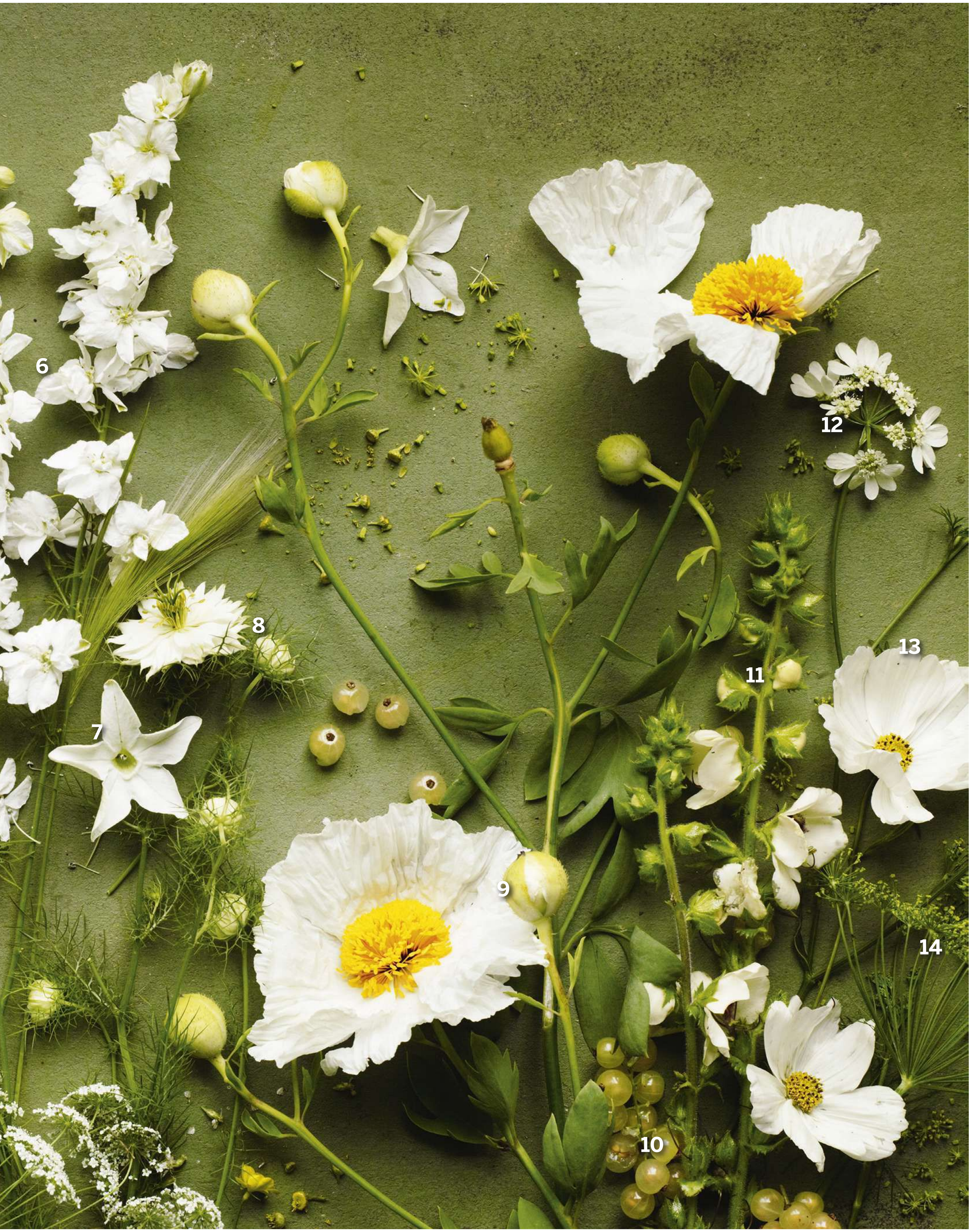
11 *Verbascum creticum* 'Allomnis' Magnificent stems of white flowers with what looks like an insect in the centre of each flower, cuts for two months from July with plenty of shorter side spires after the main event. Can be tricky to establish but worth persevering. 1.5m.

12 *Orlaya grandiflora* Another popular cutting annual with delicate lacy umbels on branching stems. *Orlaya* is best direct sown in late summer to establish deep roots, thereafter it should self seed. 50cm.

13 *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Sonata White' (Sonata Series) Another oh-so-useful annual. Most cosmos aren't worth bothering with but this and *C. bipinnatus* 'Purity' are the best forms for cutting. Easy to sow and grow and useful for months if you keep picking. 45cm.

14 *Anethum graveolens* 'Mariska' Umbels start off acid green, then develop into a good yellow and fade to brown. Thoroughly useful in vases at all stages. Annual but a reliable self-seeder. 1.25m.

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Purple haze

1 ***Fragaria vesca*** Wild strawberries add a delightfully unexpected texture to a bouquet. 2m.

2 ***Clematis* 'Warszawska Nike'** Velvety purple flowers on good green foliage. Looks stunning as the trailing component for summer arrangements. 3m. AGM.

3 ***Penstemon heterophyllus* 'Electric Blue'** Easy to grow and place in the vase. One of the most interesting penstemons for cutting. 45cm.

4 ***Platycodon grandiflorus*** Flowers for longer than many of its campanula relatives, and lasts well in the vase. 20cm. AGM.

5 ***Echinops sphaerocephalus* 'Arctic Glow'** Spiky spheres are stunning in bouquets and vases. Must be picked young or they take on a brown tinge. 1.8m.

6 ***Allium sphaerocephalon*** To avoid an onion aroma steep them overnight in a pint of water with a teaspoon of liquid Savlon added. 60-90cm.

7 ***Aconitum napellus*** Tall dark spires are invaluable for their colour and shape. Steep in water separately overnight before putting them with other flowers. 1m.

8 ***Clematis* 'Purpurea Plena Elegans'** Last exceptionally well and the nodding heads are stunning in delicate or large bouquets. 4m.

9 ***Thalictrum uchiyamae*** Delightfully fine foliage is topped by showers of tiny pink and yellow flowers followed by pretty seedheads. 1.25m.

10 ***Acanthus mollis*** Stunning huge spires for really large arrangements, but a greedy coloniser of space so don't grow this unless you can let it roam. 1.5m.

11 ***Vaccinium corymbosum* 'Bluecrop'** Fruits reliably and heavily from midsummer. 2m.

12 ***Pennisetum* x *advena* 'Rubrum'** Mound-forming grass with brush-like flower. Slightly insignificant in the garden but beautiful in bouquets. 1.5m. AGM.

13 Boysenberry Bred from raspberry, blackberry and loganberry, provides interesting texture. 2m.

14 ***Acanthus spinosus* Spinosissimus Group** Adds similar height to *Acanthus mollis*. 7.5cm.

15 ***Sanguisorba menziesii*** All sanguisorbas are good for cutting. The smaller fluffy heads float around a bouquet and larger forms hang down like tails. 75cm.

16 ***Clematis* 'Praecox'** Stems are strong and resilient. Excellent when you want long trails of foliage. 2.5m.

All four arrangements were created by Anne Townley of Ascott Gardens, Ascott, Warwickshire CV36 5PP. Tel 01608 684246, ascottgardens.co.uk

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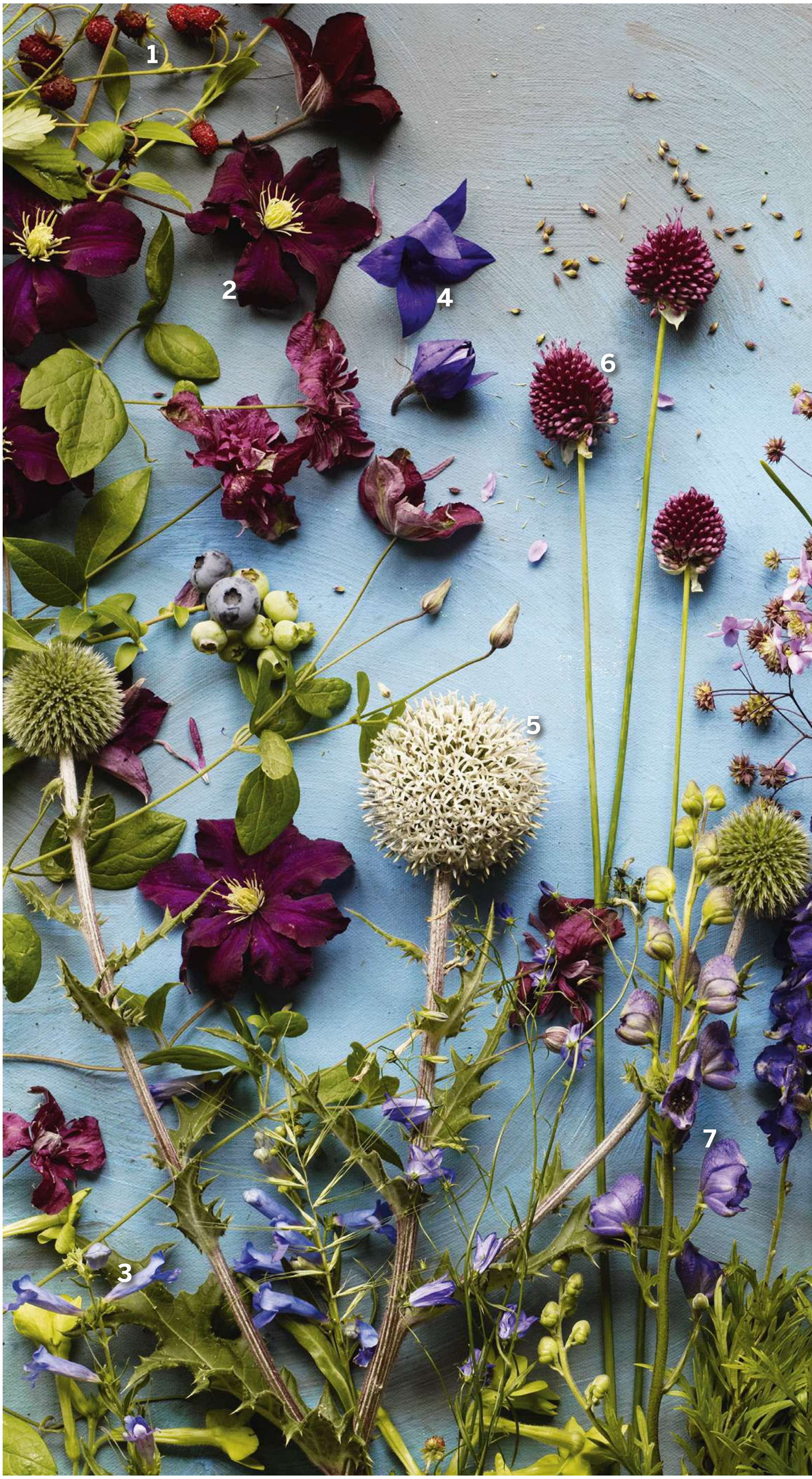
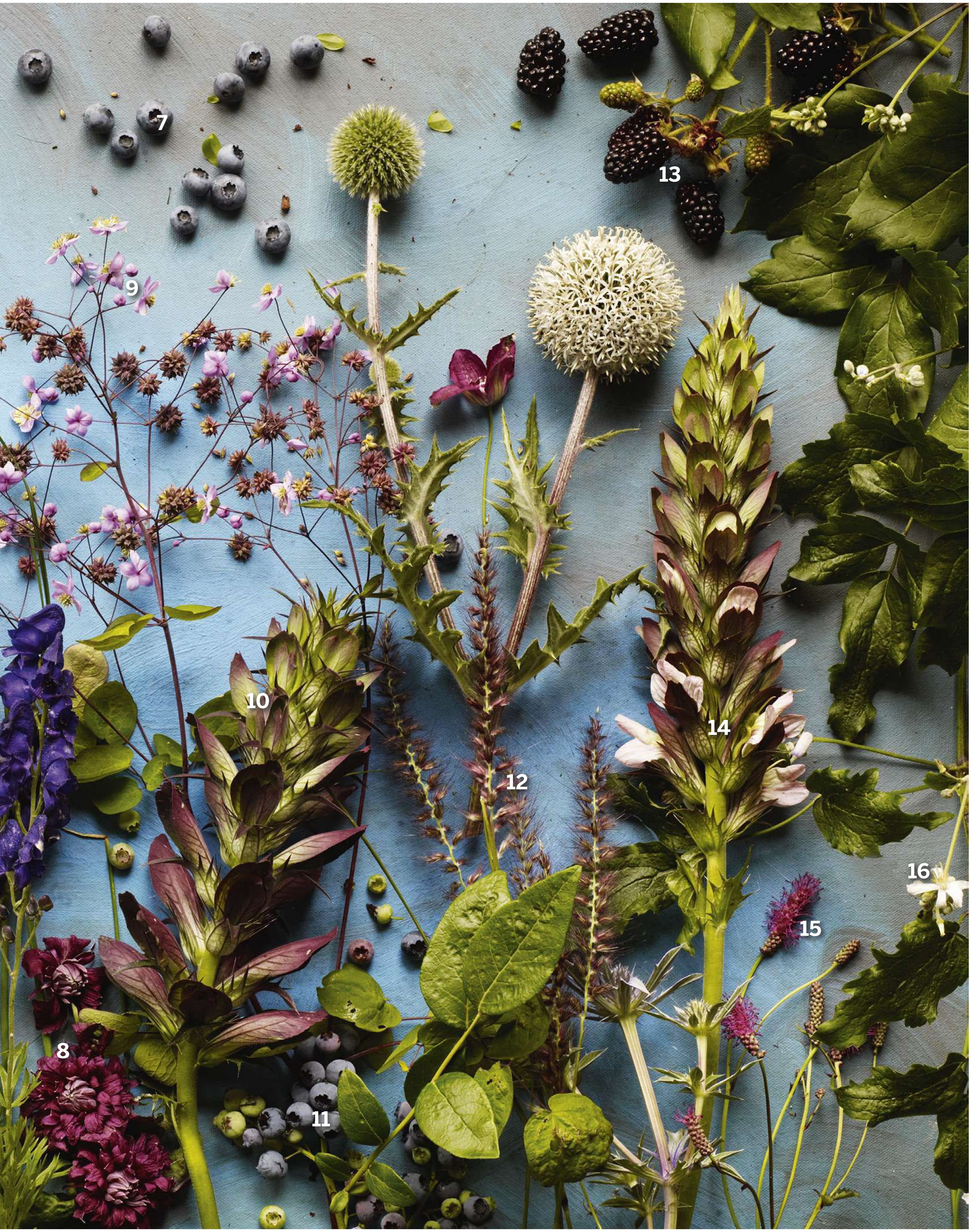
READER OFFER

All of the images in this feature are available to buy as limited-edition prints. See page 103 for details.

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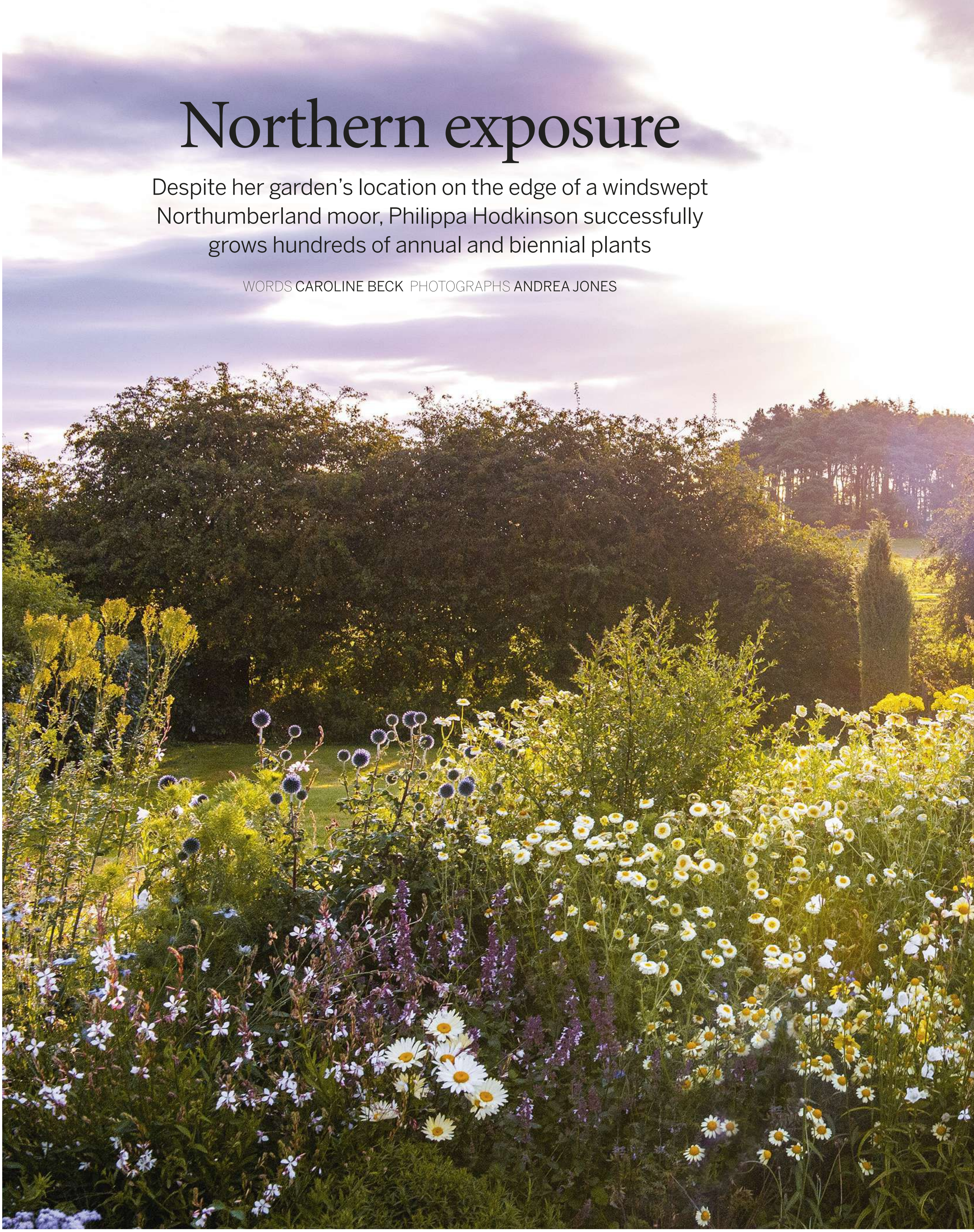


Northern exposure

Despite her garden's location on the edge of a windswept Northumberland moor, Philippa Hodkinson successfully grows hundreds of annual and biennial plants

WORDS CAROLINE BECK PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREA JONES

Philippa Hodkinson likes a challenge. She gardens in England's most northerly county, Northumberland, on a windy moor where even the cattle have sturdy coats. In summer and autumn her garden flares with colour from hundreds of annual and biennial plants, all grown from seed. It might appear folly to grow plants that need to germinate, grow, flower and set seed all in one year, especially when the season can be so brief, but she learned patience and technique from the best – the artist, designer and plantswoman Gertrude Jekyll.

Philippa plants out seedlings sown in spring in her unheated greenhouse.

Until 2013 Philippa was the gardener for the National Trust's tiny castle garden on Lindisfarne just off the Northumberland coast, created in 1911 by Jekyll and the Arts and Crafts architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens. The fashionable pair were commissioned by Edward Hudson, the founder of *Country Life*, who used the romantic Tudor castle as a summer residence and wanted a garden to enhance it. For most of the year it's blasted by salt-soaked winds, but in July, August and September it overflows with annuals from Jekyll's original plan – *Calendula officinalis* 'Orange King', eight types of sweet pea, blue cornflowers, poppies and her big favourite, the delicate annual delphinium, larkspur.

"I learned so much at Jekyll's garden but mainly I learned how to grow there," says Philippa. She transferred that skill into her own garden, growing biennials, such as *Smyrnium perfoliatum*, sweet rocket, honesty, eryngium, angelica and sweet William, which make strong plants before the annuals kick in, and perennials, such as gaura, which in this northern spot don't make it through winter so need to be treated as annuals. She deadheads throughout the season to encourage flowering and thrives on the thought that each new year is a blank canvas on which to experiment.

She sows most things in March in her unheated greenhouse. "I don't sow straight into the soil as too many things can scatter the seeds, including wind, rain and my two dogs, and they tend not germinate as well in the ground." She's driven by colour, something she absorbed from Jekyll's planting plan, which uses strong contrast and blocks of single flowers rather than plants dotted randomly about. She also learnt thrift. "It's much cheaper to grow your own plants. You don't need grand facilities to grow hardy annuals and biennials, and it's so rewarding to watch seedlings you've grown emerge." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

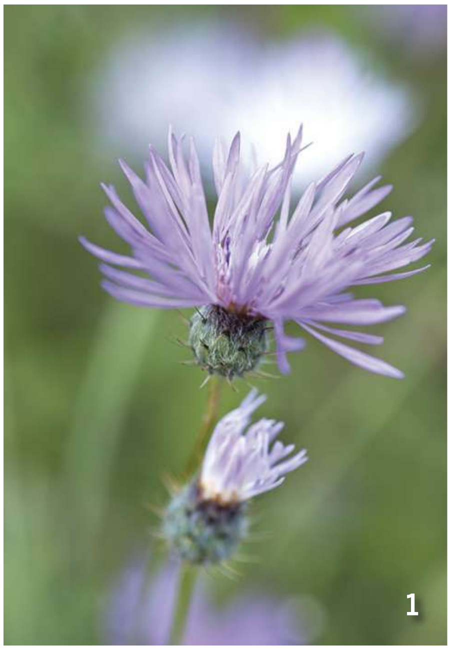
Find details of Philippa's border-design consultancy at hodkinsongardendesign.com

How to sow seeds

- Plan what seeds you'd like to sow in winter and order in January. Wash the inside of your greenhouse or polytunnel with soap and hot water to prevent mould spores building up.
- Start off seeds using fresh seed compost in clean seed trays (wash well with soap and hot water) as this will help prevent damping-off, a fungal disease that attacks seedlings.
- Sow under cover in March. An unheated greenhouse, polytunnel or even windowsill will do, as many annuals need cool conditions in which to germinate. Sow in seed trays or modules and wait until they develop strong roots before thinning out and potting on.
- Sow biennials May to July, so the plants reach a good size before planting out in September.
- Most annual or biennial seeds need to be covered lightly with compost, but very small seeds, such as foxgloves, are best surface sown.
- For sweet peas, start off in February planting them about 2-3cm deep in root trainers (see left), soaking the compost (not the seeds) and then leave alone until the first shoots appear. When they have about 2-3 pairs of leaves, nip out the leading stem which strengthens the plant.
- Young plants should be 'hardened off' in a cold frame before planting out in April and May, quite deeply so they're not sheared off by the wind.
- A few annuals, such as poppies, don't like being transplanted so are best sown directly into the soil in May. You'll know your soil is warm enough once other seedlings, or weeds, start to appear.

30 favourite plants from Philippa's garden

Most of these flower June to late September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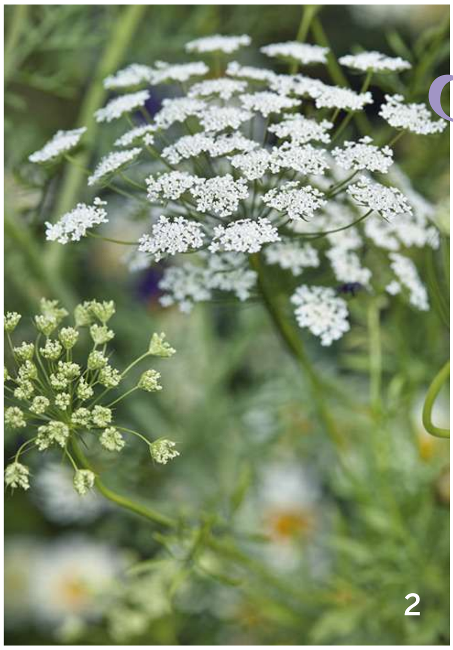
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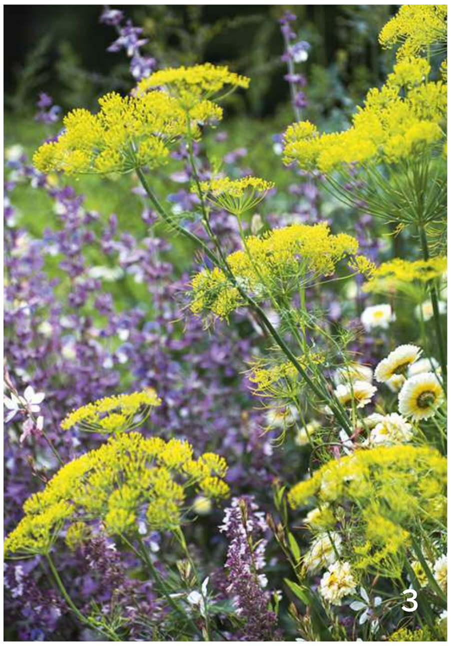
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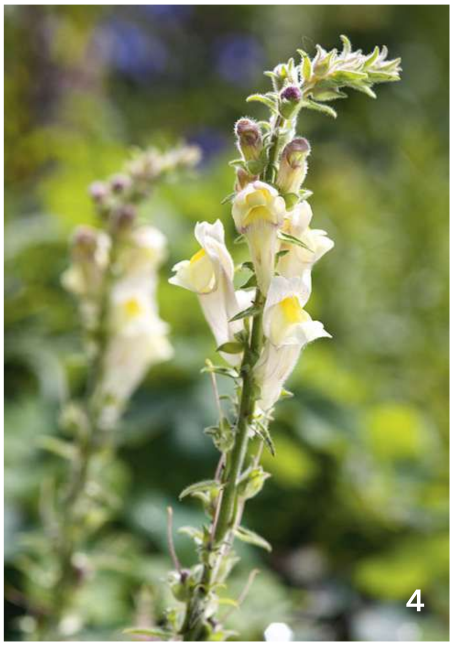
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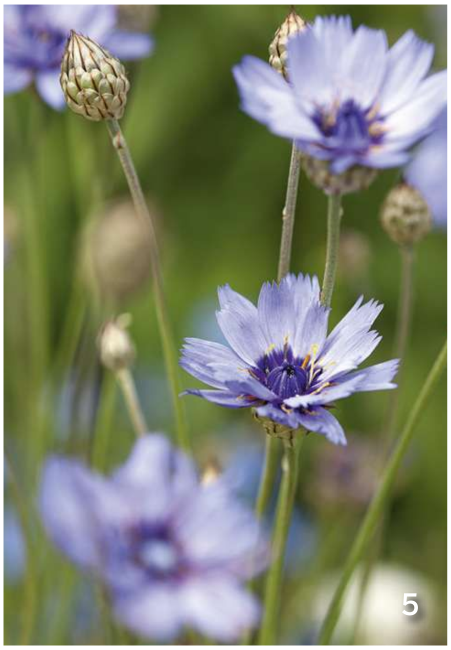
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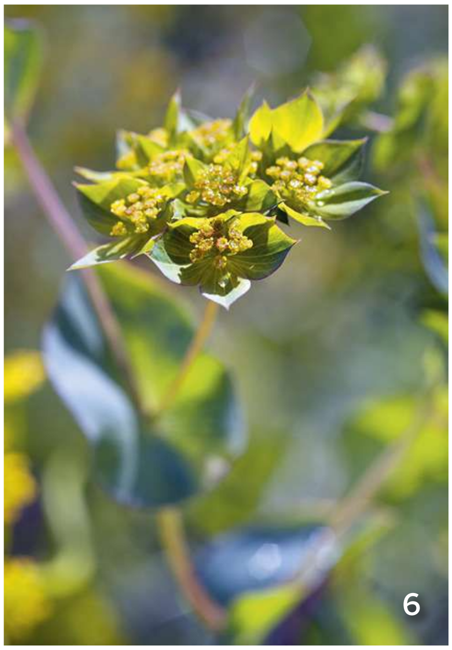
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1 *Amberboa moschata*
A tall-stemmed plant with purple-violet flowers, rather like a delicate thistle-head. It's an easily grown, scented annual that makes an excellent cut flower. Best sown en masse to create a dramatic effect. 75cm.

2 *Ammi visnaga*
Don't be put off by its common name of bishop's weed. This voguish plant is like a super-charged cow parsley, but with much bigger, more dramatic flowers. It's nectar-rich so attracts butterflies and bees too. 1.2m.

3 *Anethum graveolens*
Better known as dill, this superb annual with lime-green foliage and yellow, umbel flowers looks good with virtually any other plant. It grows easily, self-seeds readily, and you can use the aniseed-flavoured leaves in cooking. 90cm.

4 *Antirrhinum braun-blanquetii*
A pale-lemon-coloured, species snapdragon with a hint of cream. It originates from the hills of Spain and Portugal and, with its candelabra shape and branching habit, makes a good addition to the border. A perennial, but Philippa treats it like an annual. 45-60cm. USDA 5a-8b†.

5 *Catananche caerulea*
Sometimes called cupid's dart, this short-lived perennial is treated like an annual in Philippa's northern garden. The flowers resemble a pretty, lilac-blue cornflower, which means it is a favourite of flower arrangers. Has little in the way of foliage, so plant in drifts for maximum effect. 75cm.

6 *Bupleurum rotundifolium*
An elegant plant with bright-green flowers. It's excellent for flower arranging as it combines well with most colours, and has a long vase life – although you need to put it in water as soon as it's cut, otherwise it can wilt. 60-90cm. USDA 4a-9b.

The list continues on the next page

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†Hardiness ratings given where available.

7 *Calendula officinalis* ‘Orange King’

A bright-orange, double flower, which was a favourite of Gertrude Jekyll who used it in large drifts in the garden on Lindisfarne. Simple to grow, it self-seeds gently and keeps on producing flowers if it is regularly deadheaded. 45cm.

8 *Centaurea cyanus* ‘Black Ball’

A dark, almost-black cornflower and a stunner, but best grown in drifts and supported with wire as it has a tendency to flop. The flowers are a bee magnet and last well out of water, making it good for decorating puddings and salads. 75cm.

9 *Cerinthe major* ‘Purpurascens’

Although it looks quite exotic, with its glaucous blue-green foliage and droplets of dark-purple flowers, this honeywort is a truly tough character, and given dry soil and lots of sun will flower its head off for months. Flower arrangers and bees love it. 45-60cm.

10 *Chrysanthemum carinatum* ‘Polar Star’

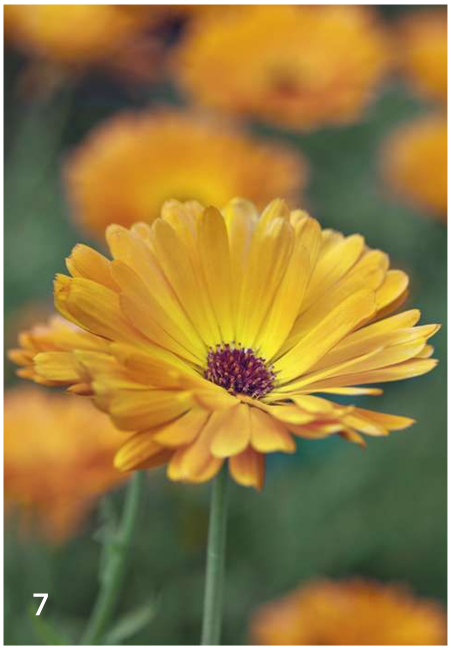
A showy, tri-coloured flower that resembles a child’s drawing of a flower. Its white petals have a yellow inner halo surrounding a dark-brown centre. It also has good lacy foliage and makes a long-lasting cut flower. 75cm.

11 *Chrysanthemum coronarium* ‘Primrose Gem’

This cheery, old-fashioned annual creates a neat dome of foliage bursting with buttons of primrose-yellow flowers with a golden centre. Another favourite of Gertrude Jekyll that she planted extensively on Lindisfarne and one that Philippa wouldn’t be without. 30-45cm.

12 *Crepis rubra* ‘Snow White’

This pinkish-white flower, a cross between a daisy and a dandelion, does best in full sun where it will bloom for months. Good for containers too as it likes being kept on the dry side. 60cm.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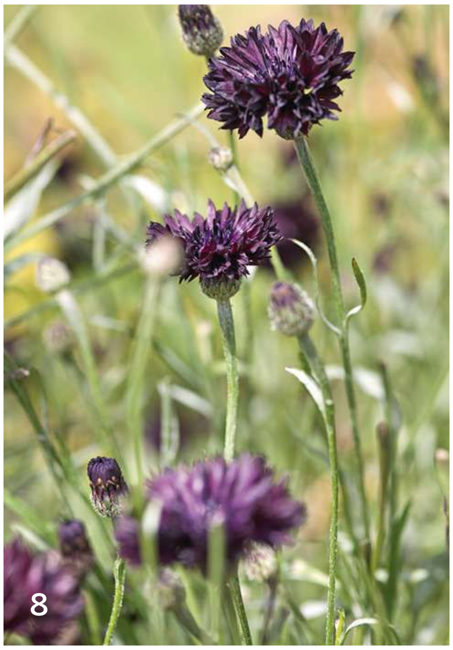
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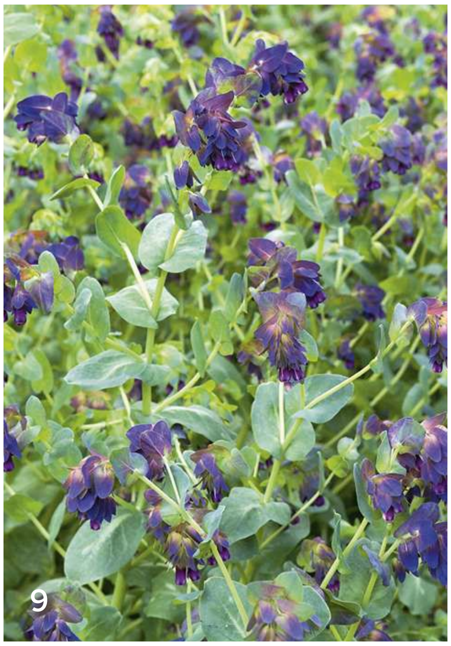
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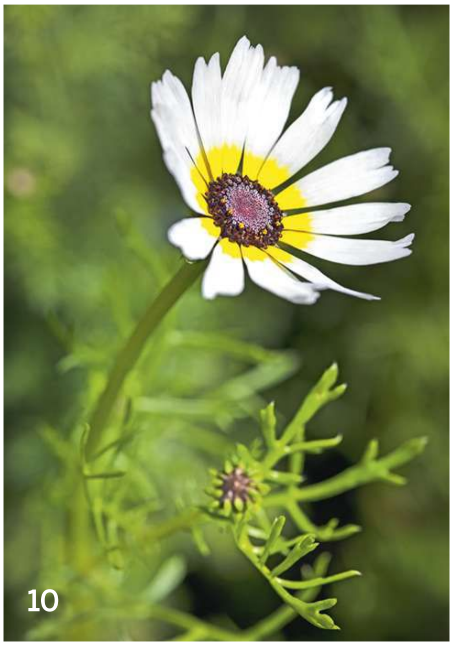
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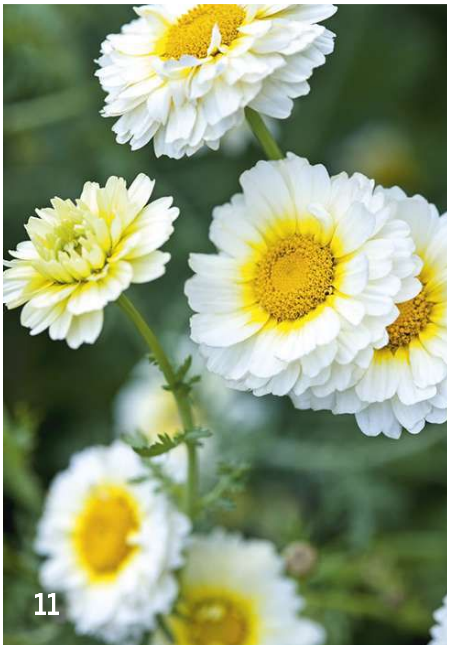
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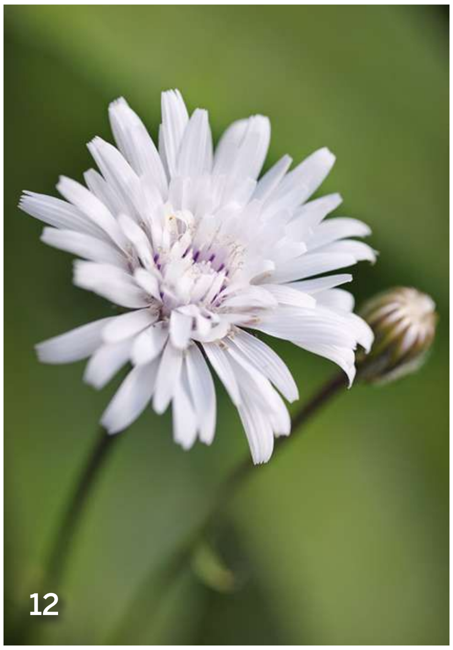
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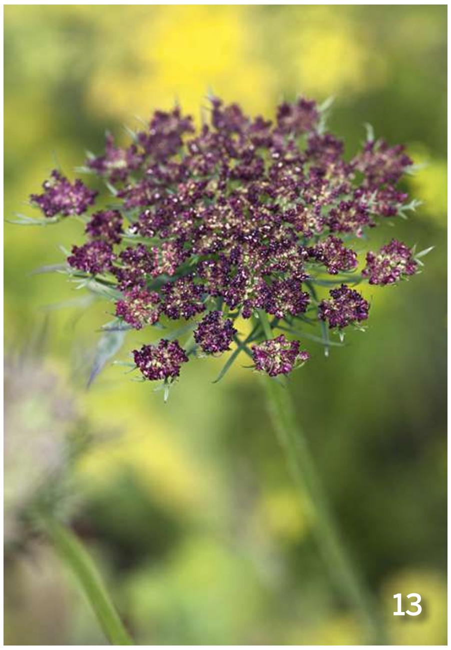
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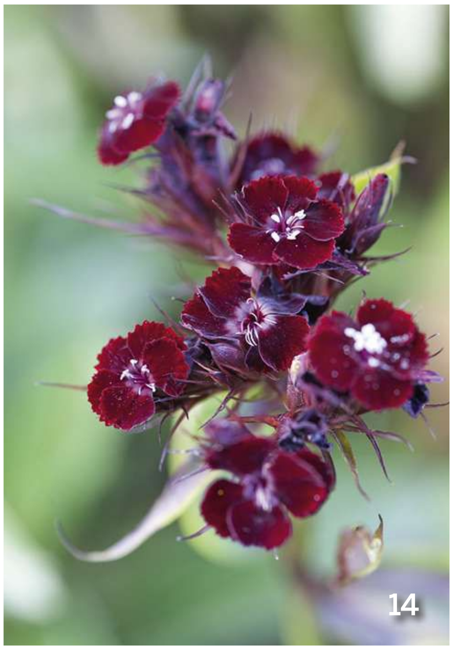
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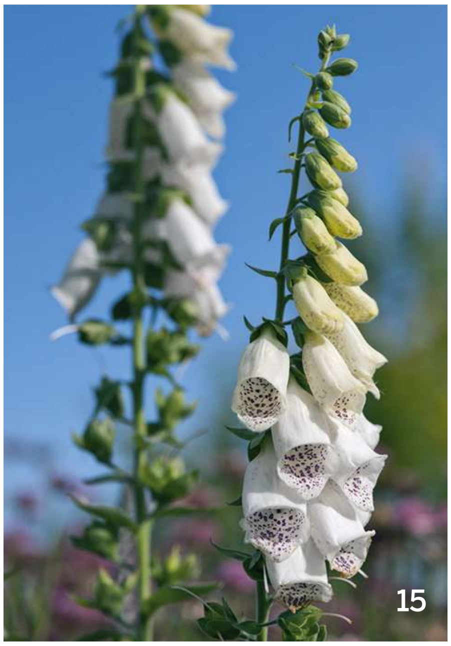
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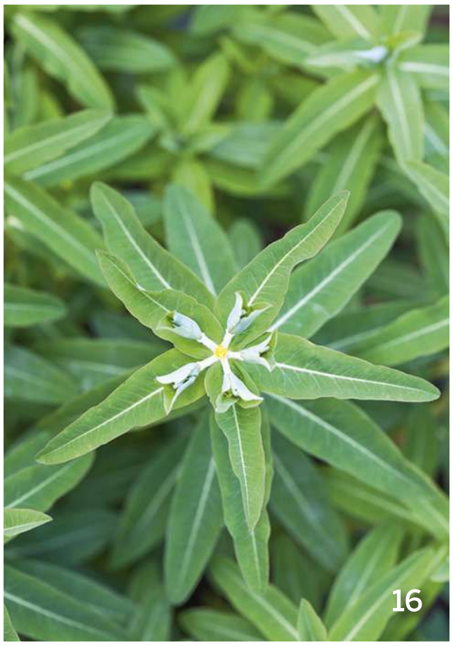
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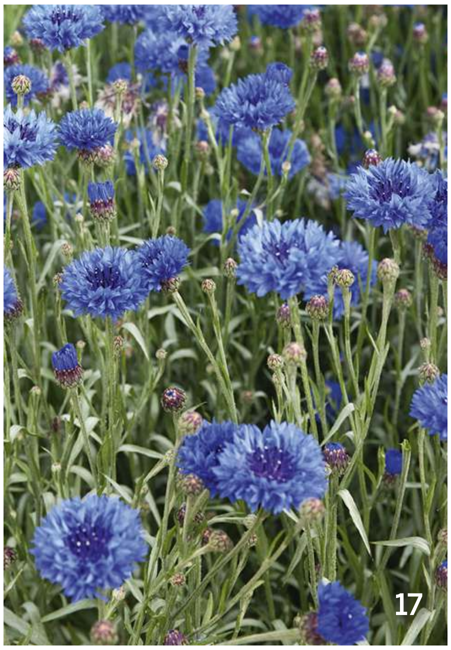
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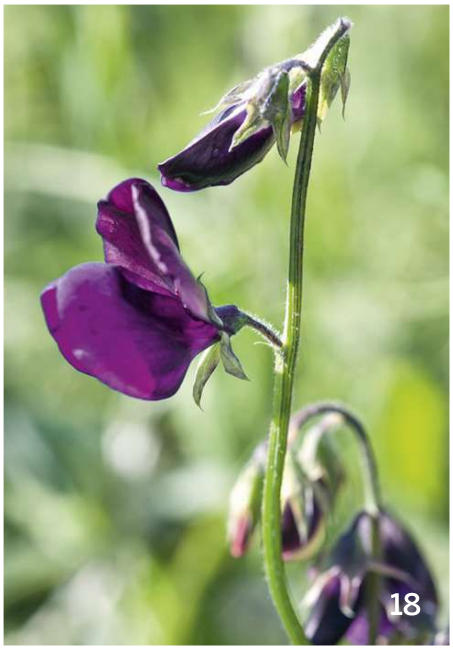
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13 *Daucus carota*
This wild carrot has the same feathery foliage as its domesticated cousins, but grown as a biennial, and left to run to seed, it produces a beautiful flower that looks like sweet Cicely. It thrives in dryish sandy soil. Sow late summer to flower the following May-June. 1.2m.

14 *Dianthus barbatus* Nigrescens Group 'Sooty'
A cottage garden favourite, this biennial has a clove-like scent, maroon-coloured leaves and an eye-catching, dark-wine-coloured flower. It will gently self-seed around your garden but is best grown fresh each year in late summer. 45-60cm.

15 *Digitalis purpurea* f. *albiflora*
Foxglove is the quintessential cottage garden flower. It's a biennial that will easily self-seed – sometimes too generously – and flower for weeks especially if you remove the central flower, which encourages it to produce side shoots. 1.2m.

16 *Euphorbia oblongata*
A short-lived perennial that is best grown from seed every year. This acid-green spurge is a beautiful foliage plant and will complement any other flower, but beware of the milky sap, as some people can be allergic. 60cm.

17 *Centaurea cyanus*
Cornflowers used to be common throughout British hay meadows, but now they're found mainly in gardens and urban meadow schemes. Easy to grow, it can work perfectly mid border, and is a perfect cut flower. Deadhead throughout the summer and it blooms itself to exhaustion. A great pollinator too. 75cm. RHS H7.

18 *Lathyrus odoratus* 'Black Knight'
An old-fashioned sweet pea with delicate flowers in a dark-claret-colour and an unforgettable fragrance. The stems can be quite short so cut the flower stem and stalk when using as a cut flower. Grow in full sun up a trellis or wigwam. Best started off in root trainers and then planted out in soil with plenty of organic matter. Keep well watered and deadhead regularly. 2m.

The list continues on the next page

19 *Lathyrus odoratus* 'Dave's'
A late-flowering, dark-coloured sweet pea that was grown and bred by Philippa's late father, David, who grew it on his allotment. She's not sure if it's unique or not, but it's a poignant reminder of her gardening dad. Sow as for *L. odoratus* 'Black Knight' on previous page. 2m.

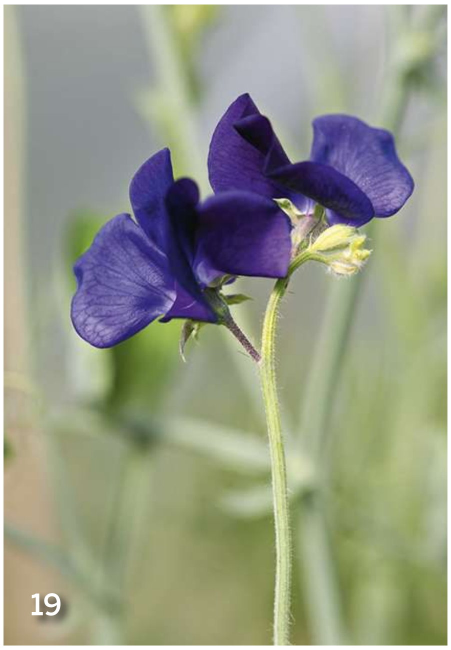
20 *Lathyrus odoratus* 'Lilac Silk'
A large, multi-flowered sweet pea in a delicate shade of lavender fading to a creamy base, with frilly flowers that last well in water, and long stems that make them good for cutting. Sow as above. 2m.

21 *Lavatera trimestris* 'Pink Beauty'
A hot-pink, trumpet-shaped, silky flower rather like another hardy annual, *Malope trifida*. Easy to grow and creates a large bushy plant. Although the flowers aren't good for cutting, as their stems are short, it makes a bold statement in the border. 1m.

22 *Linum grandiflorum* 'Rubrum'
The blood-red flowering flax has a satin sheen to the petals. It is one of the easiest, and showiest of all annuals to grow, but best planted in full sun and sandy soil, as they will tolerate some dryness. Grow en masse for best effect. 30cm.

23 *Linum usitatissimum*
This sky-blue, common flax is harvested commercially for linen and linseed oil, so it is an incredibly useful and historically significant plant. Easily grown and a gentle self-seeder, it looks like a piece of summer sky has fallen into your garden. 1.5m.

24 *Nigella damascena*
Better known as love-in-a-mist, this old-fashioned and easily grown plant also comes in white, purple and pink, although the traditional sky-blue version is arguably the most lovely. It self-seeds, and the dried seedheads make a striking winter display in a vase. 30cm.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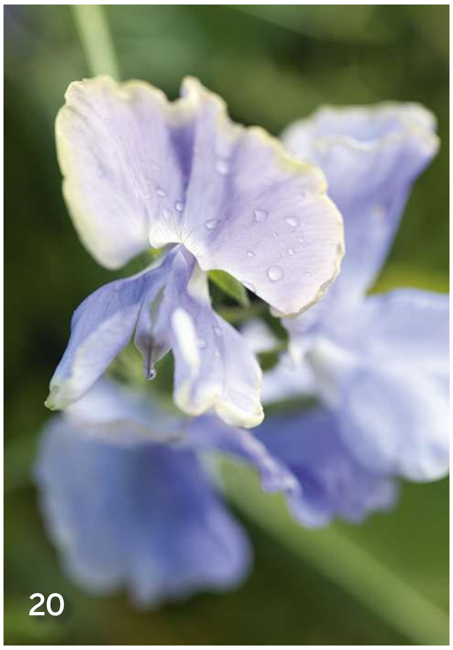
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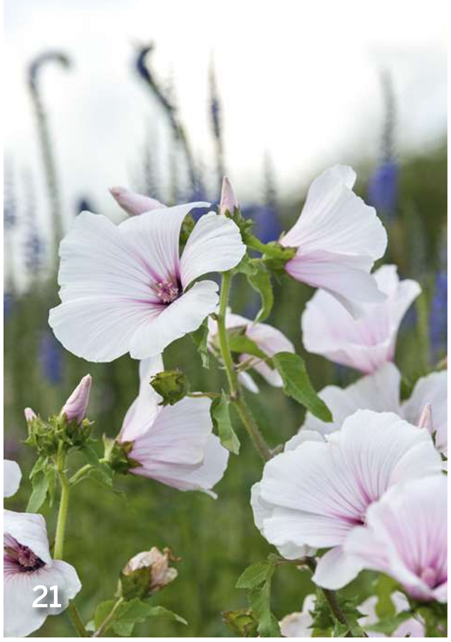
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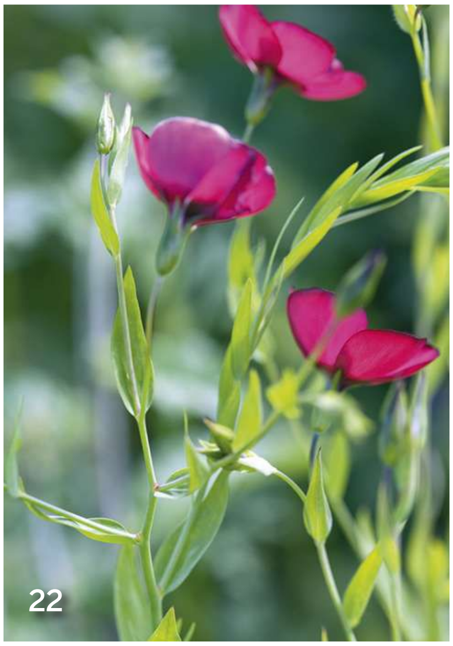
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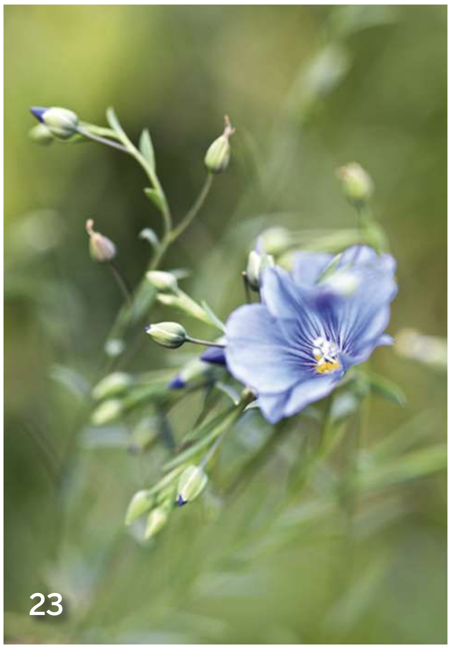
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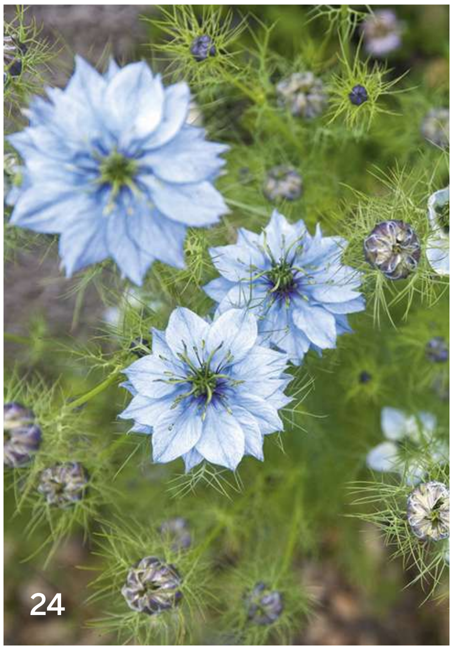
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25 *Orlaya grandiflora*
These umbellifers have become very fashionable in the past few years, for good reason. They're easy to grow, don't need staking and their white lacy flowers and ferny foliage look good in the border or a vase. Protect new growth from slugs. 60cm.

26 *Pisum sativum* 'Carouby de Maussane'
A mangetout cultivar with dark-purple flowers that precede the sweet pods. Once the flowers are over the pods are delicious gently steamed or eaten raw in salads. 2m.

27 *Reseda odorata* 'Grandiflora'
Mignonette has been grown for centuries in British gardens for its sweet scent and lovely flower shape. It has a long vase life, while keeping its fragrance, making it ideal for cutting. It's best grown in dry soil and full sun. 45-60cm.

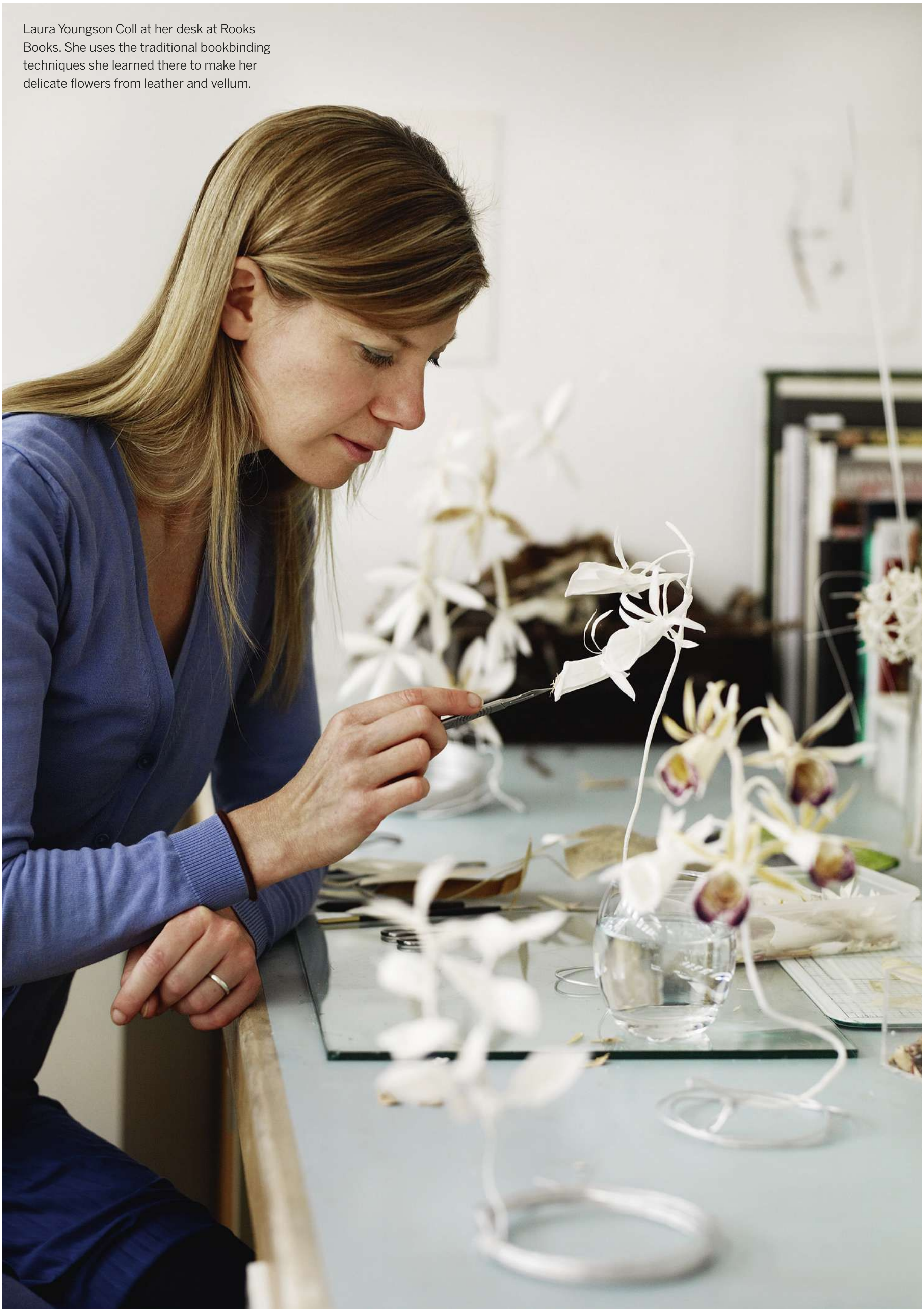
28 *Ridolfia segetum*
A plant that looks a lot like dill but is even bigger, with more acid-yellow flowers that remind you of an exploding firework. It's a favourite among flower arrangers because of its height and long vase life, but it looks terrific in the border too. 1m.

29 *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Rustic Dwarf'
This coneflower has flowers that look like a pumped-up daisy, but are in shades of bronze, yellow and mahogany. It makes a superb autumn cut flower alongside sunflowers and calendula. 60cm.

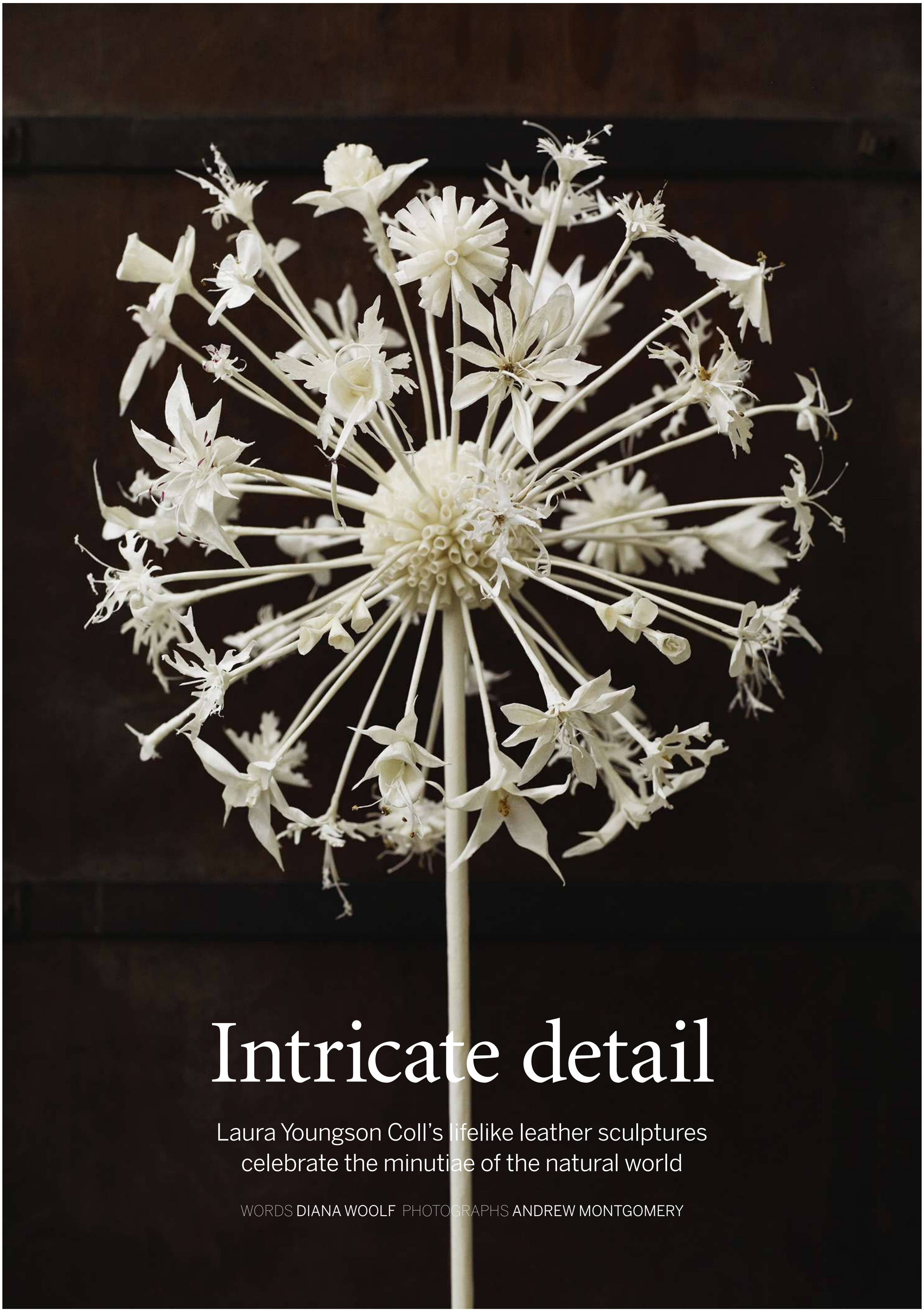
30 *Verbascum nigrum*
Some verbascum, such as *V. olympicum*, have a reputation for being tough but not hard to grow. They do, however, need space and their candelabra profile makes them a great border plant. It's a perennial, but one that Philippa treats as an annual. 2m.

Seed suppliers

- **Chiltern Seeds**
  Tel 01491 824675, chilternseeds.co.uk
- **Plants of Distinction**
  Tel 01449 711005,
  plantsofdistinction.co.uk
- **Plant World Seeds**
  plant-world-seeds.com
- **Sarah Raven**
  Tel 0345 092 0283, sarahraven.com



Laura Youngson Coll at her desk at Rooks Books. She uses the traditional bookbinding techniques she learned there to make her delicate flowers from leather and vellum.



Intricate detail

Laura Youngson Coll's lifelike leather sculptures celebrate the minutiae of the natural world

WORDS **DIANA WOOLF** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**

Laura is fascinated by the natural world in all its complexity, and is particularly drawn to what she describes as "the overlooked, quiet things"

Laura Youngson Coll makes intriguing, startlingly lifelike sculptures of plants out of leather. From a distance they could be mistaken for real flowers, and Laura says, "They're not what you expect from leather, but I enjoy challenging people's expectations and making them look closer."

Laura began her career as a multi-media sculptor, doing an MA in Sculpture at London's Royal College of Art in 2004, and fell into leather working by chance. "It was completely coincidental – a friend was doing some leather paring work for Gavin Rookledge and asked me if I was interested," she says. Laura took up the offer and enjoyed the work so much that she stayed at Rooks Books, Gavin's leatherworking and bookbinding studio, on and off for the next ten years. "It gave me a really good knowledge of leather both technically and aesthetically, although I still feel I am experimenting with it," she says.

Now in her mid thirties, Laura is still at Rooks Books, but today she has her own desk where, since 2012, she has been working on her own projects. She's already made a name for herself with these and in 2014 won the Perrier-Jouët Arts Salon Award. More recently, she's completed a commission for the National Trust property Biddulph Grange, in Staffordshire, where the gardens were created by the Victorian plant hunter James Bateman. Laura's work for Biddulph was inspired by Bateman's obsession with exotic plants and included a life-size, botanical copy of one of the orchids he discovered (*Vanda batemanni* 'Grandiflora') as well as a native British lady's slipper orchid. "It was a brilliant project and I enjoyed exploring the darker side of importing plant species and messing around with ecology," says Laura.

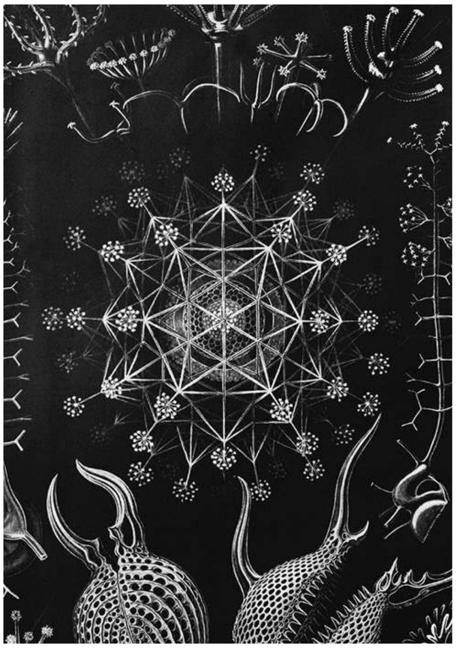
Laura uses the traditional bookbinding techniques she learned at Rooks Books to make her sculptures. Scraps of leather or vellum are gradually worked up into bigger pieces, which are then joined to a wire armature to create an entire plant. Laura is passionate about leather, enthusing about its textures and colours, and loves the whole making process. "I really enjoy having an idea and working out how to bring it to life," she says. The finished sculptures are displayed in glass domes: "They are so intricate that I think they need to be displayed in a clean-cut, scientific way."

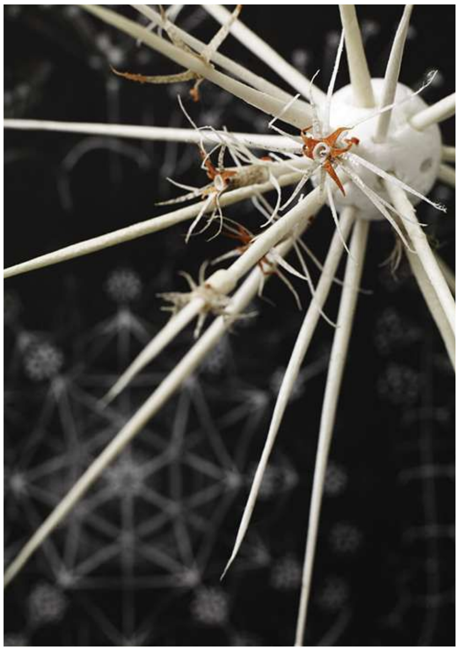
Laura is fascinated by the natural world in all its complexity, and is particularly drawn to what she describes as "the overlooked, quiet things". It's no surprise to learn that a previous project included a series of meticulously made models of lichens. Some, such as her 'Indicator Species' series, were scientific copies of actual plants, while others were given imaginary details: "I like playing with fact and fiction," she laughs. For her next project Laura hopes to scale up her work and create a transect of a wild-flower meadow, with each flower – complete with its root system – perfectly reproduced in white vellum. "It would be a real technical challenge, but would look extraordinary," she says. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Rooks Books, Cooper's Yard, London SE19 1TN. Workshop open by appointment only.
Tel 020 8766 6398, rooksbooks.com

You can find out more about Laura's work and forthcoming exhibitions on her website **laurayoungsoncoll.co.uk**, or call 07870 899920.
Her work is also available to buy through Contemporary Applied Arts (caa.org.uk).

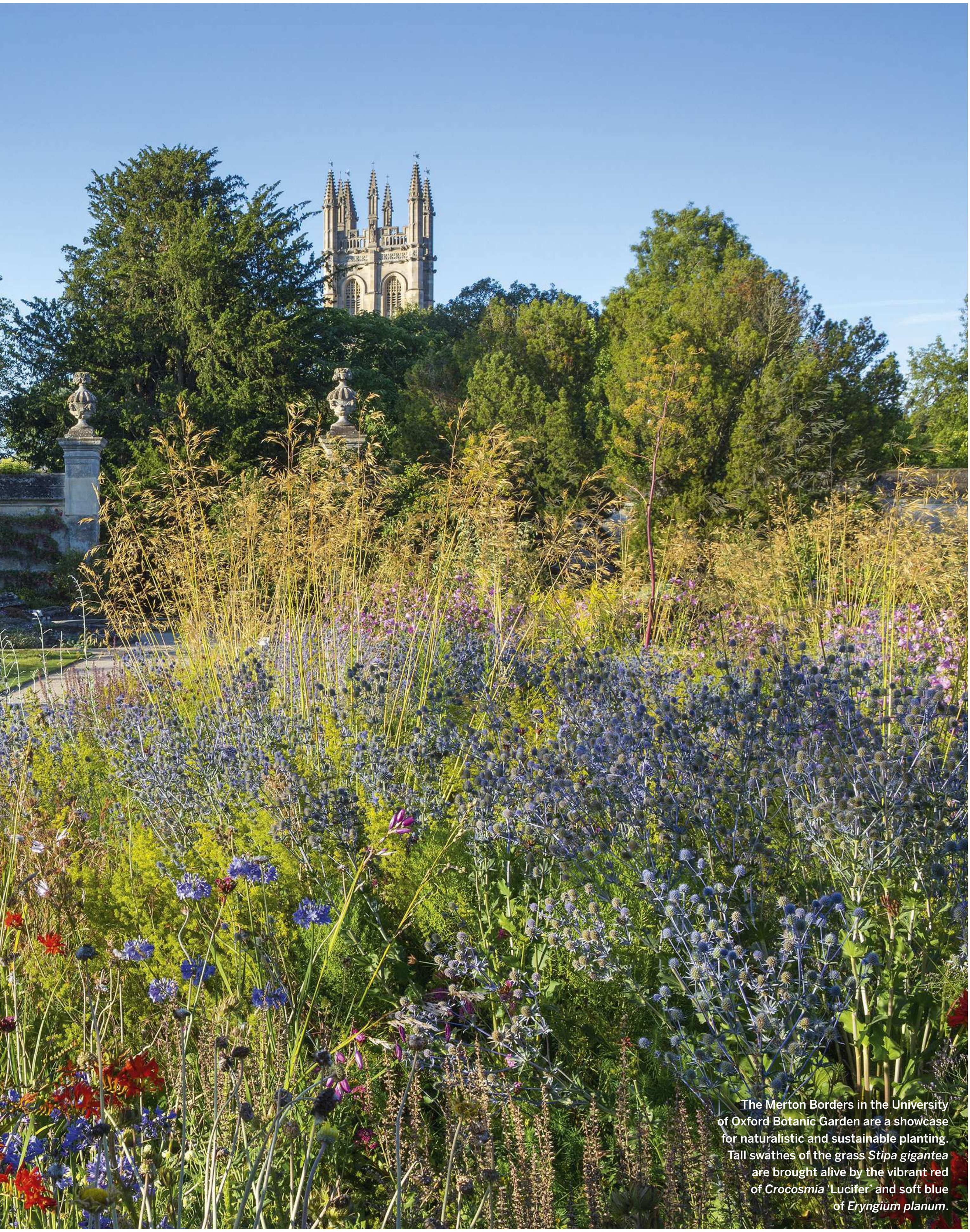




Life lessons

In the borders of one of the world's oldest scientific gardens Professor James Hitchmough has provided a modern masterclass in sustainable planting for the 21st century

WORDS **NOËL KINGSBURY** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**

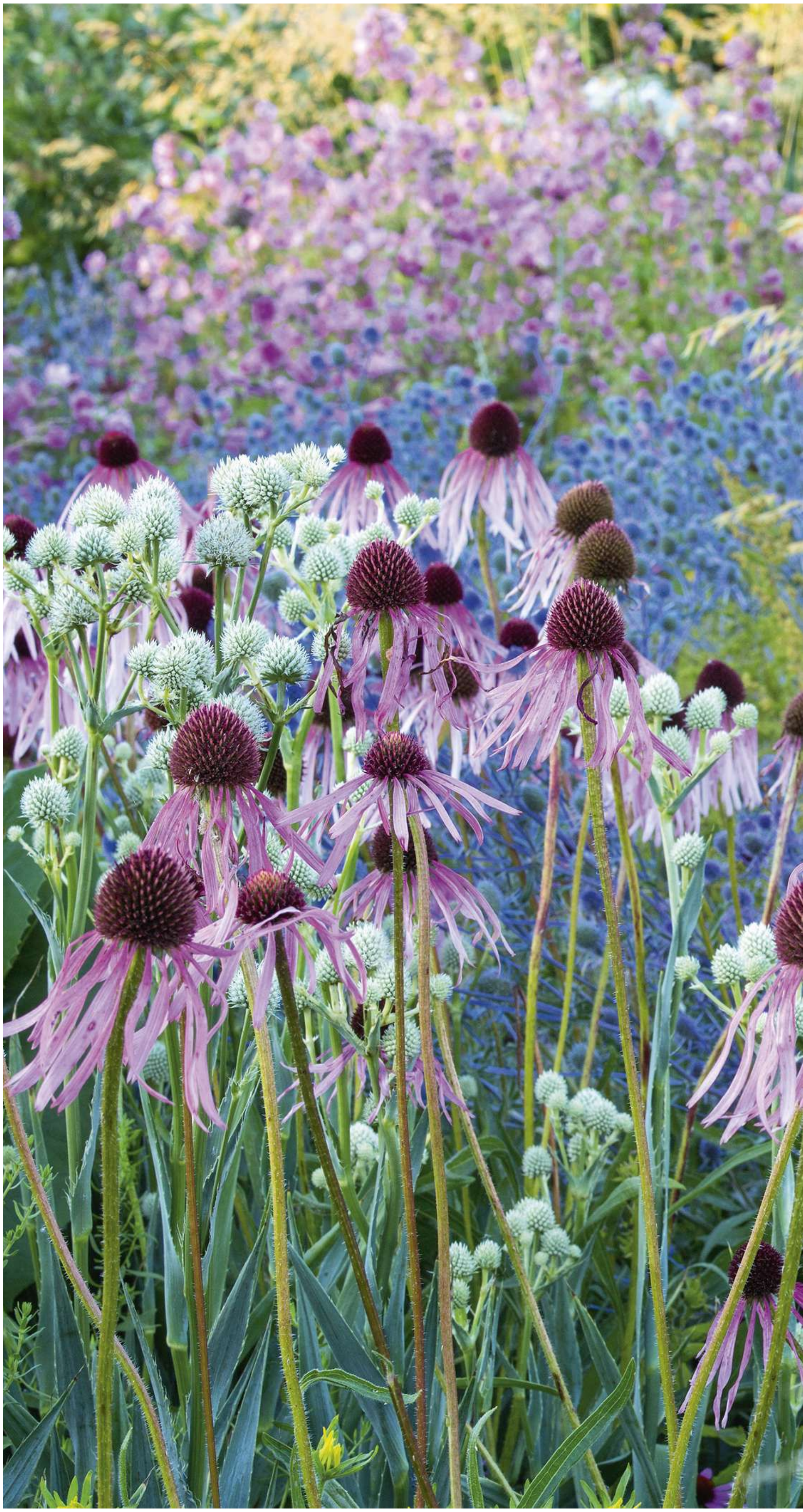


The Merton Borders in the University of Oxford Botanic Garden are a showcase for naturalistic and sustainable planting. Tall swathes of the grass *Stipa gigantea* are brought alive by the vibrant red of *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' and soft blue of *Eryngium planum*.

The wow factor is fundamental," says James Hitchmough of the natural habitats he explores all over the world. Much of his globe-trotting comes with his role as Professor of Horticultural Ecology in the Landscape Department of the University of Sheffield, but he freely admits his main reason for spending so much time travelling the world is that it is "fun".

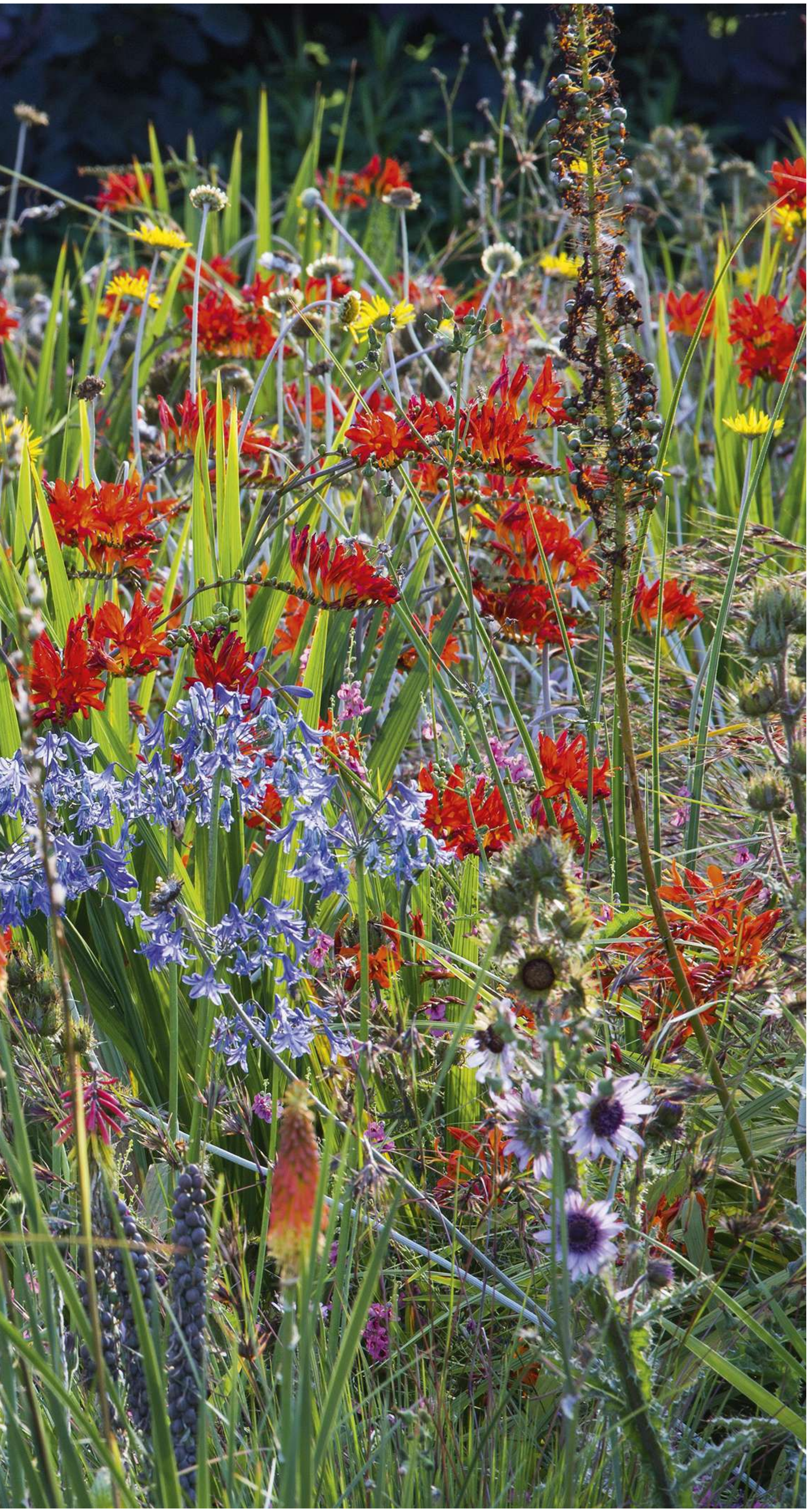
James is best known for his work, in collaboration with designer Sarah Price and his Sheffield University colleague Nigel Dunnett, at the London 2012 Olympic Park. Those plantings now form part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. James's academic research largely looks at understanding the natural wild plant communities of open situations: European meadows, North American Prairies, the steppes of Asia and eastern Europe, high-altitude grasslands in China, and the vegetation of the cooler climate areas of South Africa. Back at Sheffield he aims to explore ways in which these often very showy plant communities can be a basis for producing low-maintenance, wildlife-friendly plantings for British public spaces. Much of the work is painstaking, for results have to withstand the cut and thrust of peer review and eventual publication in academic journals.

When the directors of the University of Oxford Botanic Garden decided they ▷



Pink prairie

The attractively ragged-looking, pink flowers of ***Echinacea pallida*** dominate the North American prairie areas in mid- to late-summer; while their dark bobble seedheads will be a distinct feature throughout autumn. Just behind it are the grey-white flower heads of ***Eryngium yuccifolium***, and further back still the pale-pink of ***Malva alcea***. The blue is ***Eryngium planum* 'Blaukappe'** and the grass on the top right is ***Stipa gigantea***. These last four plants also feature in the neighbouring Eurasian steppe planting.



▷ wanted a contemporary, sustainable planting scheme to redevelop part of the garden they turned to James. Founded in 1621, the Botanic Garden is one of the oldest scientific gardens in the world, and for its 21st-century borders it wanted to showcase plants likely to become more important in the UK if climate change models prove correct, so James proposed three naturalistic plant communities from seasonally dry regions. The border they were intended to fill was almost 1,000 square metres in size, with a shape that James describes as being like an aircraft-carrier deck. To divide the space he opted for a ground pattern that alternated triangular wedges of the three distinct mixes. The first of these mixes contains mainly plants found growing on the North American prairie, as well as some steppe species from west of the Rockies; the second includes plants from the Eurasian Steppe, an area that extends eastward from Ukraine; and the third is made up of plants from the Drakensberg montane grasslands of South Africa.

Certain elements – notably two forms of *Kniphofia triangularis* – are repeated across all three for continuity. "Self-seeding will ultimately lead to a fusion of the three," says James, but he adds that this will be ▷

Bright and breezy

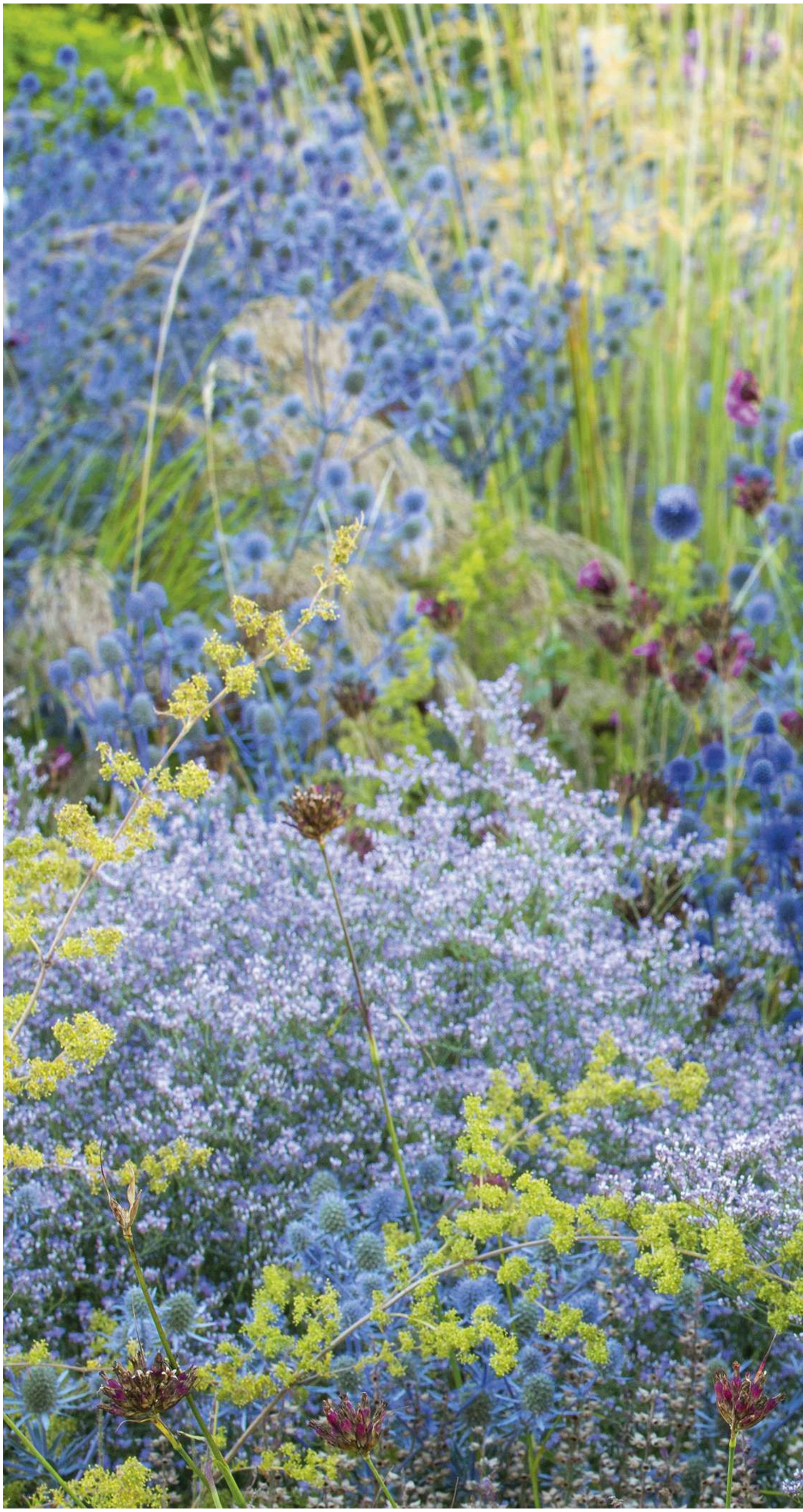
Inspired by montane grasslands of South Africa, this mix includes many vibrant plants, such as ***Crocosmia* 'Lucifer'** with its scarlet flower heads, two orange red-hot pokers: the paler ***Kniphofia uvaria*** (on the left) and the brighter ***K. hirsuta*** (bottom right), and the dazzling blue of ***Agapanthus* Headbourne hybrids**. Perhaps less familiar are the pale-purple daisies, ***Berkheya purpurea*** (bottom right), and the warm-yellow daisies, ***Haplocarpha scaposa***. The grass is ***Themeda triandra***, and stalks of the dark cerise seedlings of ***Dierama pulcherrimum*** peer over from the rear in the middle of the picture.

▷ mediated by the site and by the decisions of the Botanic Garden's team of gardeners.

Like most of James's plantings, the Oxford project was mostly sown, and this is what makes his work so different to most others in the landscape business. "Sowing enables natural ecological relationships to be established between plants," explains James and, crucially, a thick canopy of vegetation from very early on. "We typically aim at around 150 seedlings per square metre," he says. The plantings rapidly acquire what is the key characteristic that distinguishes natural from most artificial vegetation: plant density. There is little space for weeds and much interpenetration of plant structures. The fact that the seed is sown into a 10cm-thick layer of sand mulch, also helps to suppress the germination of weed seed buried in the soil.

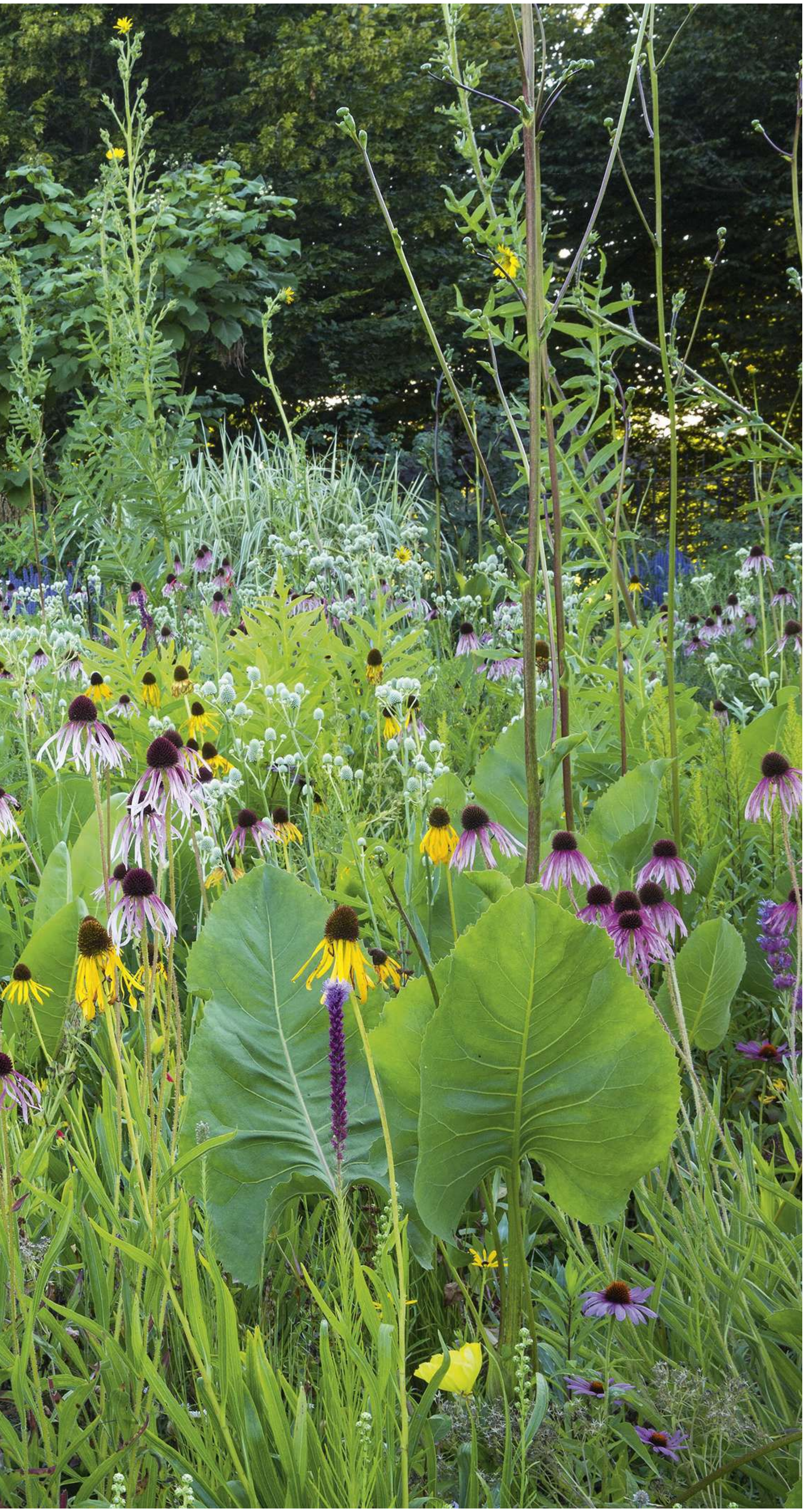
Seeding also gives plantings that natural look, as plants are intermingled and blended in a way that would be almost impossible to achieve otherwise. Plants appear to be randomly distributed, although they are in fact located according to their responses to small differences in soil and aspect, and to the intense competition between each other.

This kind of naturalistic planting can also work on a much smaller scale than that of the Botanic Garden; it all comes down to balancing the size and shape of the plot with the immediate garden surroundings. Meadow-type vegetation – plants of up to ▷



Singing the blues

In this section, based on plant life found growing on the Eurasian steppe, shades of blue create a cool calm. Here the steely blue of ***Eryngium planum*** **'Blaukappe'** and the fuzzy lilac of ***Limonium latifolium*** (to its left) blend with the spherical heads of ***Echinops ritro*** (foreground), while the pink of ***Dianthus carthusianorum*** and yellow ***Galium verum*** add contrast. The latter plant is a British native, and is also common in European limestone grassland – both good sources of species for dry, rubble-filled soils.



▷ around 60cm in height – can work well in small patches surrounded by a conventional lawn of probably no more than two square metres, although a summer 'hay cut' after flowering helps to keep it tidy. Prairie planting, which uses taller plants up to around 2m, can work well as a narrow strip, while low-growing, drought-tolerant steppe vegetation is ideal for small, dry areas.

One of the great innovations of the past 20 years has been the annual seed mixes, devised by the Dutch gardener Rob Leopold and developed here in the UK by Nigel Dunnett. Perhaps one day James's perennial mixes could also be a big part of our gardens and parks, but this may require some re-thinking about maintenance. "Plants will choose their own places," says James. "A lot of designers might not be comfortable with that." He is currently researching new approaches to maintenance, treating plantings as if they were meadows and using techniques new to perennial gardeners, such as mid-season mowing. There is a lot to learn, and a lot to look forward to, and the planting here at Oxford gives us an exciting peek into a brave new garden future. ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address The University of Oxford Botanic Garden, Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AZ.
Tel 01865 286690.
Website botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
Open Daily. Check website for opening times.

Green grasslands

North American, prairie-style planting brings a fresh feel to this area where the dominant green is punctuated by the pink ***Echinacea pallida***, its yellow relative ***E. paradoxa*** and grey-white bobbles of ***Eryngium yuccifolium***. The tall, yellow daisy ***Silphium laciniatum*** adds height to the back of the image, while the dramatic leaves of ***S. terebinthinaceum*** are visible in the foreground on the right.

Make origami seed packets

WORDS ALYS HURN
PHOTOGRAPHS LIAM McAULEY

If you have favourite plants you like to grow every year it makes sense to harvest your own seed to sow. These pretty packets are fun to make and make thrifty use of old issues of *Gardens Illustrated*

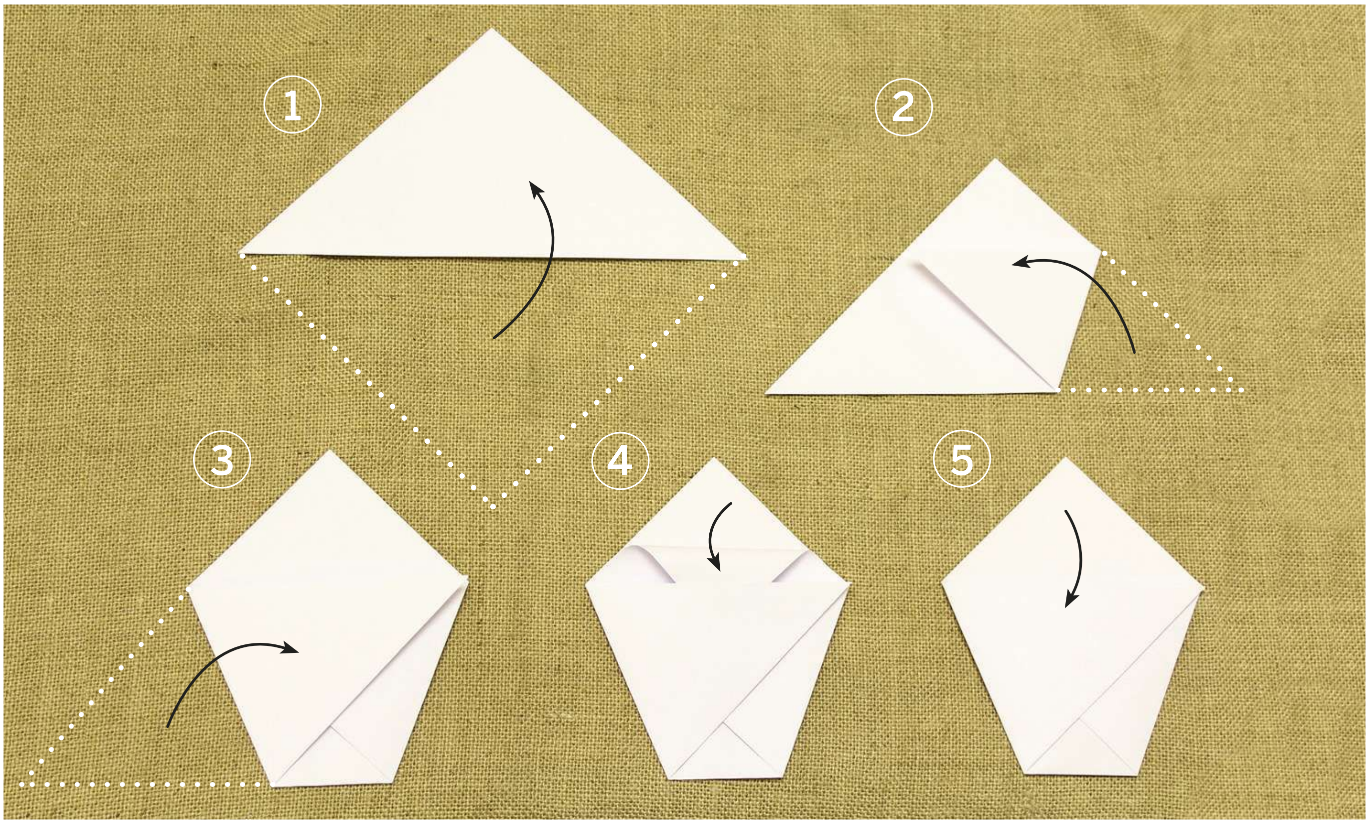
1 Begin with a square piece of paper. Fold it diagonally into a triangle and position so the longest side is facing you.

2 Fold the bottom right corner up to meet the centre of the opposite side so there is a straight edge along the top.

3 Repeat with the bottom left corner, again meeting the opposite side. Both corners should line up across the top edge.

4 Tuck the first of the two triangles at the top into the triangular pocket created by making the previous fold in step 3.

5 You will see that you now have an envelope that you can fill with seeds. Once filled, close by tucking the remaining top triangle into the same fold as in step 4.



1 As before, begin with a square of paper and fold it in half to make a triangle. With the longest side facing you, fold down the upper top corner to meet the bottom edge.

2 Fold the bottom right corner a third of the way across, along the bottom edge.

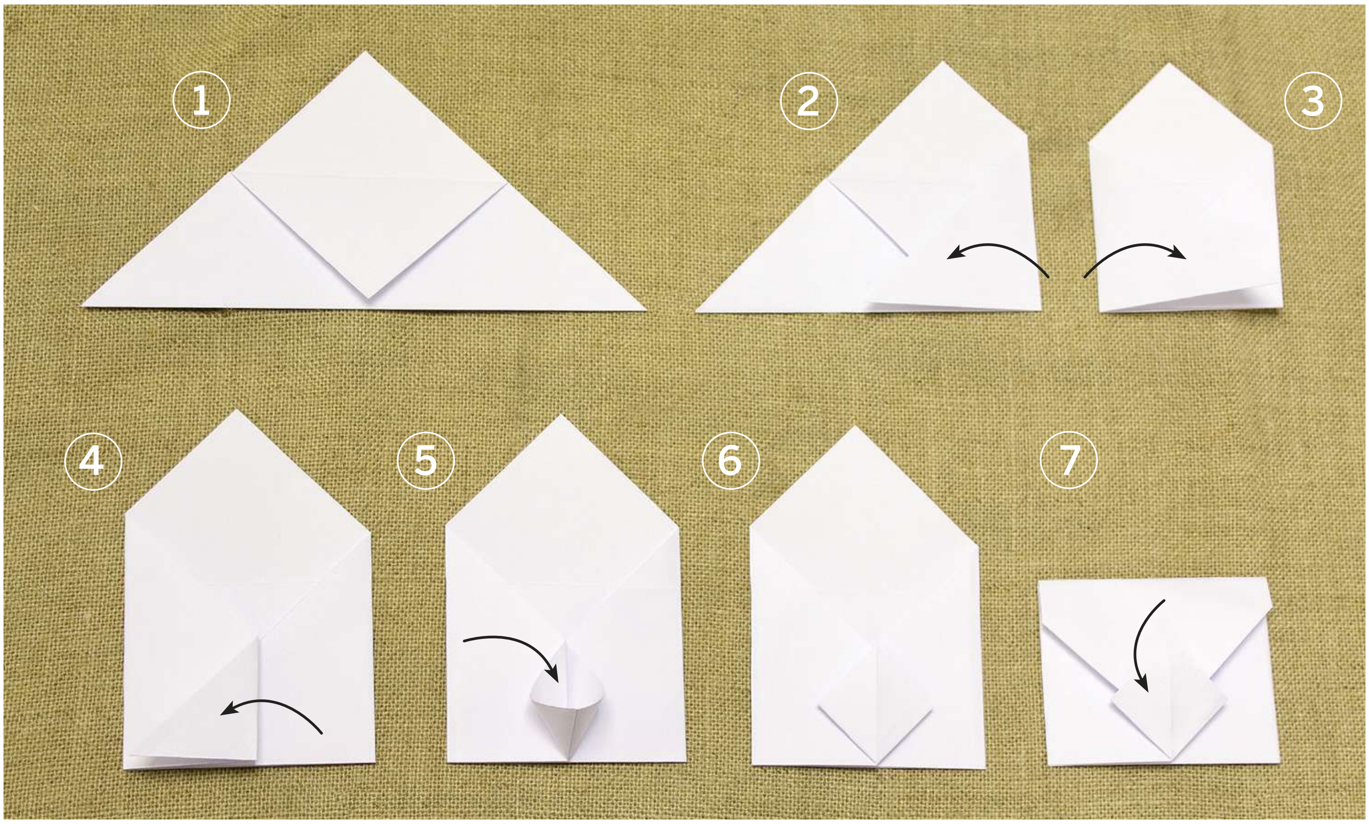
3 Repeat with the bottom left corner, folding over to line up with the opposite side, along the bottom edge.

4 Then fold this corner back over itself to meet the bottom left corner, again along the bottom edge.

5 Use your finger to then prise open this small triangular pocket, making sure to reach into the very bottom corner.

6 Firmly press the opened triangle down so that the two top corners meet and form a small square.

7 Fill your envelope with your favourite seeds then tuck the top piece into the pressed square to fold shut. □

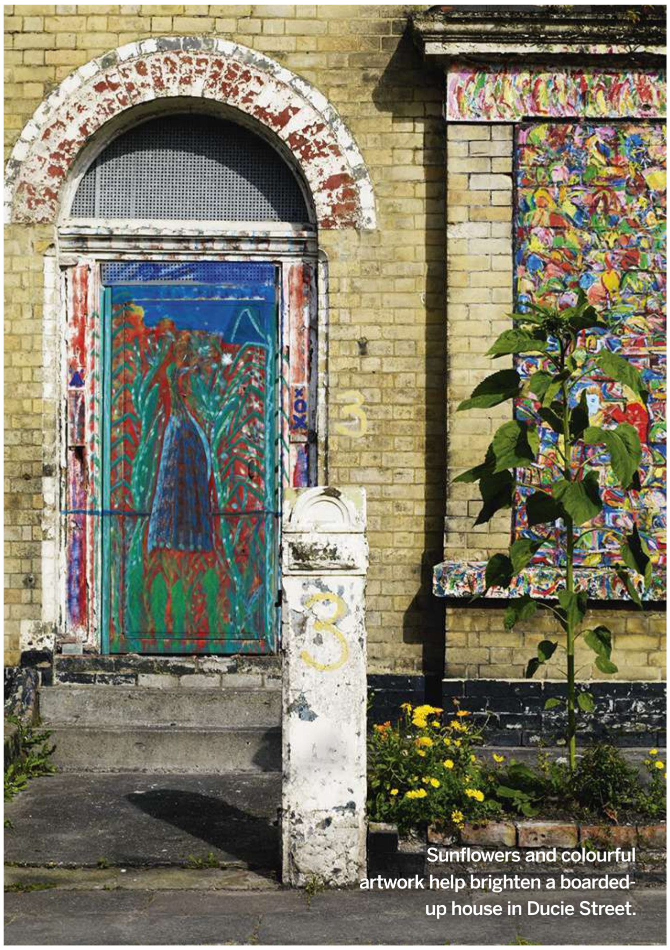


Street life

Once a byword for riots and deprivation, Toxteth in Liverpool has been given a new lease of life thanks to the green fingers of a group of tenacious residents

WORDS CAROLINE BECK PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Founder members of 'That Bloomin' Green Triangle', Eleanor Lee, left, and Helen Hebden, make new plans for the flower meadow they sowed in the rubble of one half of Ducie Street, demolished by the council in 2010.

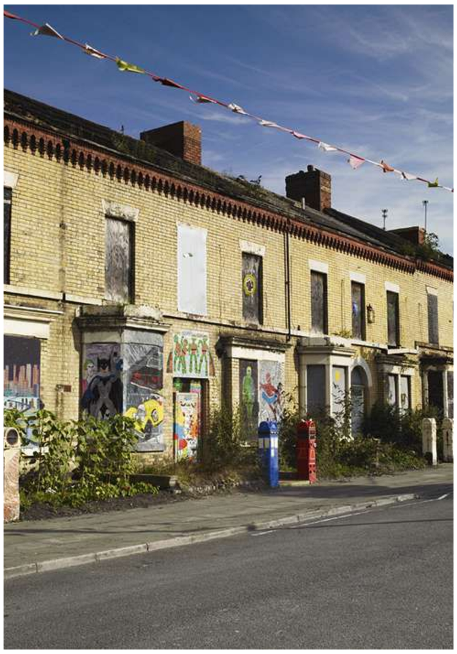


Sunflowers and colourful artwork help brighten a boarded-up house in Ducie Street.

The taxi driver was baffled when I asked him to take me to Liverpool 8. I'd come to find a garden of sorts, but despite the sunny day, he warned me not to get out of the car. Toxteth, even within Liverpool, still has an awkward reputation, like a difficult relative best forgotten. He dropped me, reluctantly, at the end of Cairns Street, a mostly derelict Victorian terrace, and I wondered why I'd come until my eye picked up paintings of flowers upon the stricken walls. In the street, old car trailers, battered wooden drawers and piles of stacked tyres were being used as plant pots, spilling over with runner beans, roses, poppies and fennel. Further down, a circular picnic bench was surrounded by tubs of salvia, sweet William and lavender, a meeting place for a group of extraordinary people, the few that remained living here. They were sorting out a watering rota and doing some deadheading. I heard them laughing before I saw them.

That was 18 months ago, and since then the story of the regeneration of these four rows of shattered terraces is something of an everyday miracle. In the summer of 1981 Toxteth erupted into nine days of rioting between police and residents, leaving behind an ugly and intractable notoriety. What followed was a 30-year policy of 'managed decline' – moving people away and allowing the houses to deteriorate until they needed to be demolished. But a handful ▷

City of Liverpool
JERMYN
STREET L8



▷ stayed. One of those who refused to move from the triangular block of terraces, known as the 'Granby Four Streets', was Eleanor Lee. By 2003 there were just eight out of 64 houses left inhabited in her road, Cairns Street. "The council breeze-blocked the windows and painted them black. It was so depressing to open your blinds in the morning and face that blank wall," she says.

Exasperated and angry, she joined forces with her remaining neighbours, Carole Foulder and Maria Bassey, a talented gardener who, according to Eleanor "rescues half-dead plants and brings them back to life again". They began planting in any space they could and others joined them. In adjacent Beaconsfield Street another long-term resident, Anna Ryan, and her neighbours painted 30 bricked-up bay windows and shuttered doors with flowers and birds. In Jermyn Street, newly retired Helen Hebden, helped replace defunct washing machines and mattresses with flowers and fruit trees. A dismal strip of waste ground that had become a dump was cleared and planted with roses, raspberries, marigolds, candytuft, snapdragon and evening primrose. In the winter of 2007 the group, now called 'That Bloomin' Green Triangle', received their first grant and put up a pair of four-metre-tall Norwegian spruce, complete with lights, and smaller trees with solar lanterns in front of the darkened derelict houses.

In 2010 the group were instrumental in setting up a lively monthly street market on the last Saturday of every month, a cross between a jumble sale and a street party. Sadly, the same year one entire half of the fourth terrace, Ducie Street, was demolished by the council. "It looked so sad, just a great big gap, so we decided to plant it up," recalls Helen. A call for help resulted in about 40 people turning up and mucking in. Rubble was raked together with soil, wild-flower seed ▷

This page, clockwise from top left

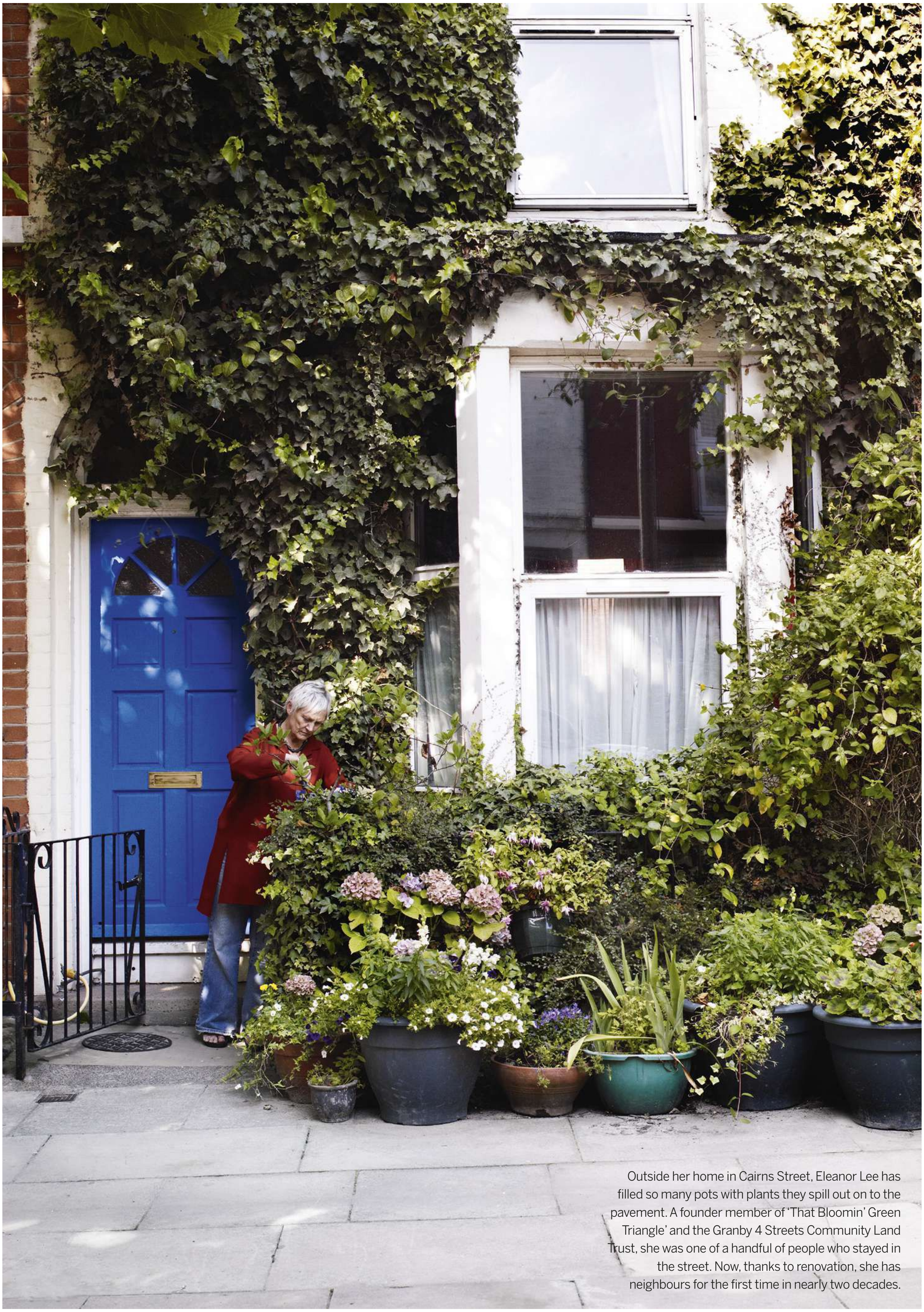
Helen Hebden, a founder member of 'That Bloomin' Green Triangle' and constant gardener.

The patch of waste ground at the end of Jermyn Street was an area for dumping rubbish until it was planted up by residents.

Murals by local residents and artists, and home-made bunting decorate the remaining half of Ducie Street. The other half was demolished in 2010 and residents sowed a wild-flower meadow in the rubble.

Green-fingered Maria Bassey, who has lived in Cairns Street for more than 50 years, waters all the plants in her street every day throughout summer.

Field poppies, sown by 'That Bloomin' Green Triangle', now self-seed on waste ground, attracting bees and butterflies to the area.



Outside her home in Cairns Street, Eleanor Lee has filled so many pots with plants they spill out on to the pavement. A founder member of 'That Bloomin' Green Triangle' and the Granby 4 Streets Community Land Trust, she was one of a handful of people who stayed in the street. Now, thanks to renovation, she has neighbours for the first time in nearly two decades.

▷ sown and watered in by hand. That summer it flowered head high with more than 40 different species of native plant including self-heal, lady's bedstraw, cornflower, white melilot, poppy and yarrow, attracting butterflies, bees and birds.

Inevitably, the resilience of 'That Bloomin' Green Triangle' has often been tested. Two years ago they faced down bulldozers sent in to tear down some of the bays of the houses, an event remembered as 'The Siege of Cairns Street'. One resident, Gina Snagg, told a workman, "You'll get in, but you won't get out again." The workmen retreated.

Finally, the determination of the remaining residents to restore life to their streets attracted attention of the right sort. Last summer they entered the streets in the National Gardens Scheme and around 80 people came. Now they've formed the Granby 4 Streets Community Land Trust (a not-for-profit organisation run by residents to ensure the restored houses remain affordable) and a social investor, Steinbeck Studio, has brought in a London-based group of young artists and architects, Assemble, who have been working alongside residents to restore some of the houses. An ambitious plan for a Winter Garden within the skeleton of two derelict houses formed the centrepiece of their 2015 nomination for the UK's most prestigious art award, the Turner Prize. A handful of tenacious people sowing seeds and planting flowers in forgotten corners to counteract neglect not of their making has triumphed over three decades of planning policy failure. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about the project at **granby4streetsclt.co.uk** and via the blog **asenseofplaceblog.wordpress.com**

This page, clockwise from top left

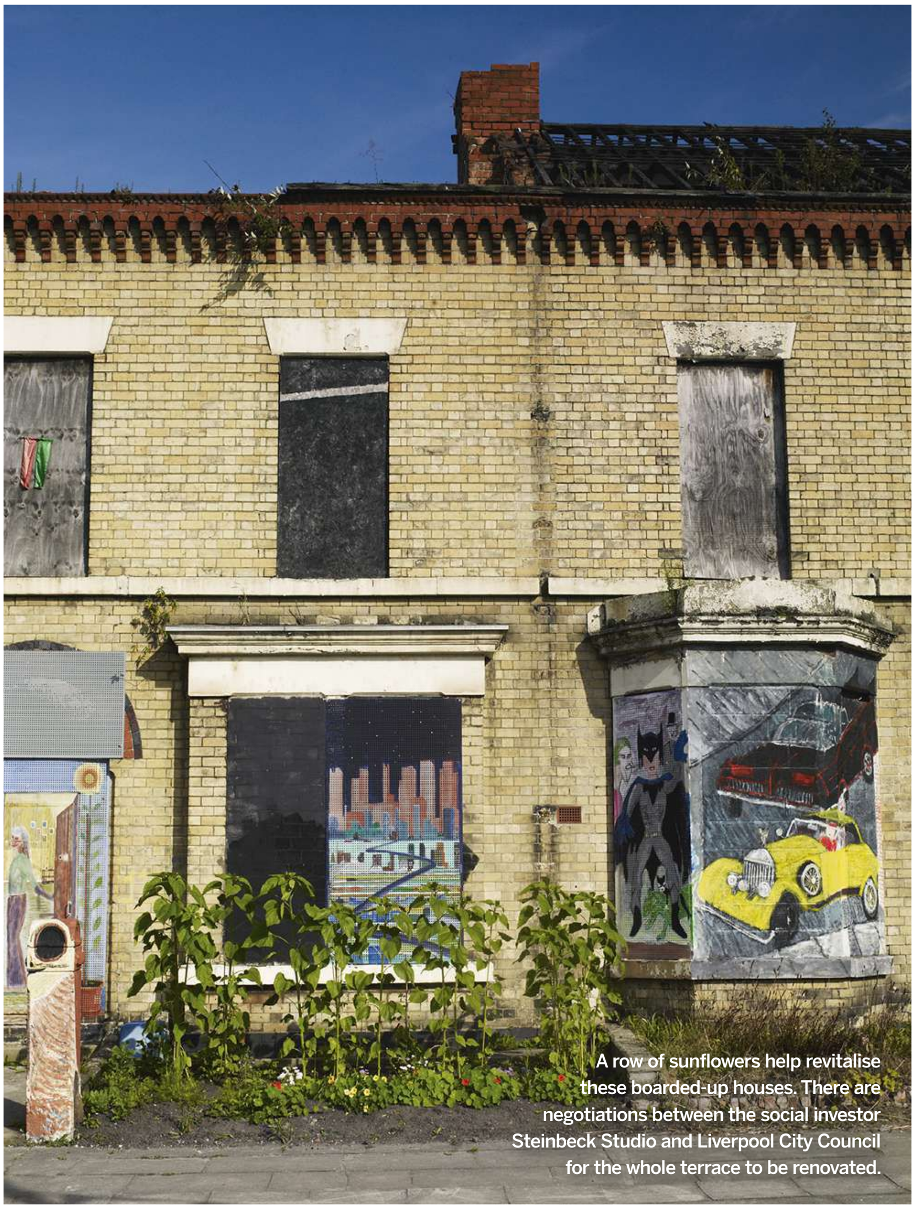
Elizabeth Robinson-Ramos, who was one of the first former residents to move back into the area two years ago, outside one of the new houses in Beaconsfield Street. A keen gardener she has been quick to join more established residents in helping to green the streets of Toxteth.

At the back of her new home, Elizabeth has created an oasis of green where she grows tomatoes, and flowering plants, such as sunflowers and chrysanthemums.

After years of neglect the gardens of Toxteth are beginning to bloom with colour, such as with these beautiful dahlias, an unknown cultivar but possibly *D.* 'Mystery Day', in Elizabeth's garden.

An abandoned car trailer in Cairns Street has been put to creative good use as a planter.

Flowers of all kinds now appear in many unexpected places, such as these corn marigolds (*Glebionis segetum*) sprouting from a crack in the paving stones.



A row of sunflowers help revitalise these boarded-up houses. There are negotiations between the social investor Steinbeck Studio and Liverpool City Council for the whole terrace to be renovated.

Greening the streets

If you know of other urban streets in need of greening then there are several organisations that offer funding and advice for community groups wishing to create green spaces in their local environments

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is a charitable trust that, among other things, gives grants to groups who are seeking to improve their natural environment and create sustainable habitats, particularly in urban areas. **esmeefairbairn.org.uk**

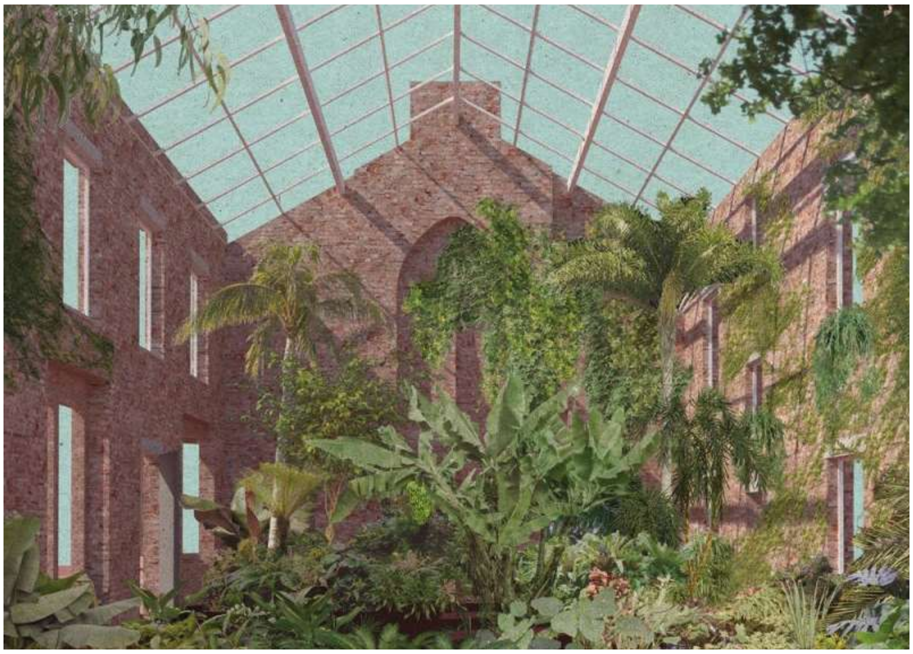
Groundwork is an environmental charity that helps local communities improve their environments. It has recently launched a scheme in collaboration with Tesco, to fund projects aimed at improving local green spaces with money raised from the 5p plastic bag charge. **groundwork.org.uk**

Grow Wild, based at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, is funded by the Big Lottery Fund, and gives awards of between £1,000 and £4,000 to groups who want to transform a piece of neglected land using native wild flowers. **growwilduk.com**

Landlife is a conservation charity based on Merseyside that champions using wild-flower planting in urban settings, often in places of dereliction. Recent projects include sowing wild-flower meadows in Everton Park on Merseyside and Princess Road in Manchester. **wildflower.co.uk**

Turner Prize

Assemble, a London-based art, design and architecture collective, has been nominated for the 2015 Turner Prize for its collaborative work with residents on ten derelict houses in Cairns Street. This is the first time in the prize's 31-year history that an entire street has been nominated. One element of the project is a proposal to turn the interior of two badly damaged houses (see below) into a community Winter Garden (below left).



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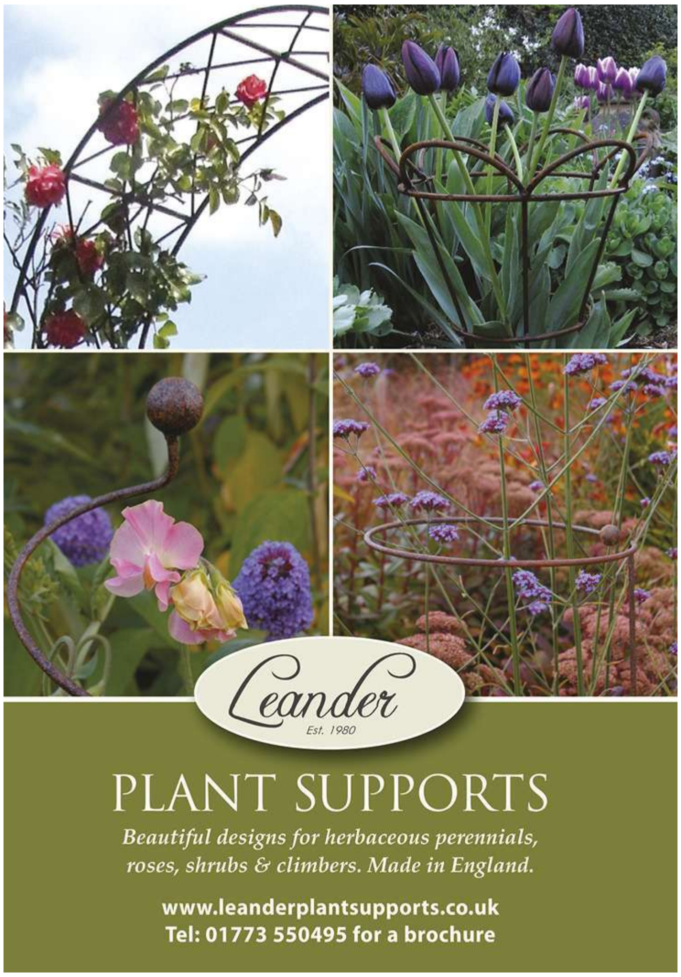

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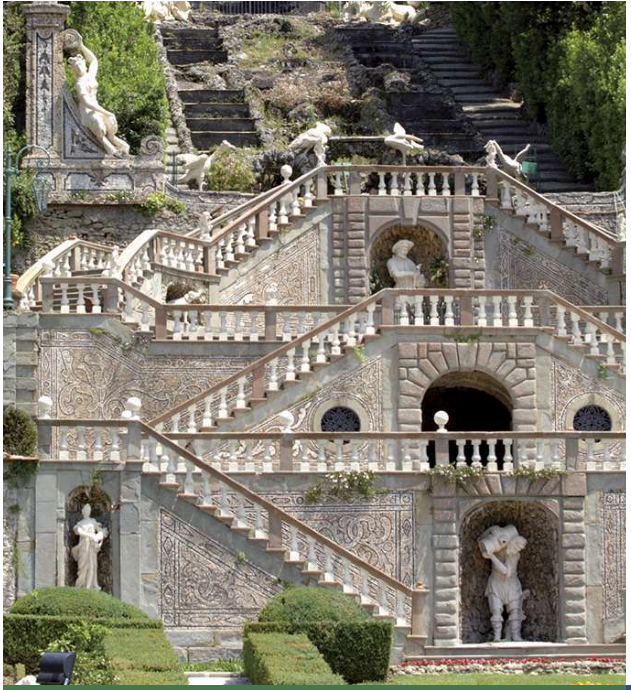

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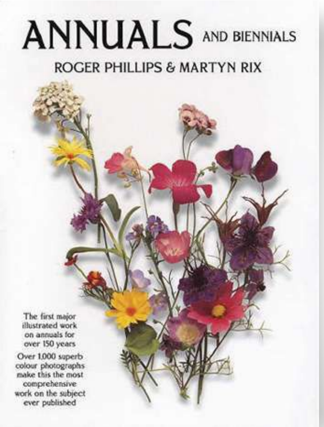
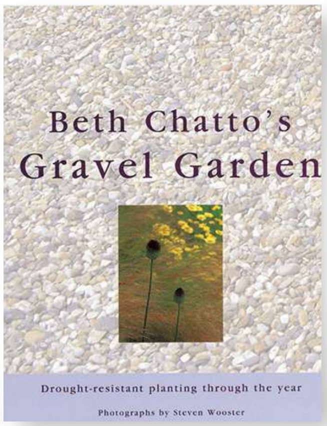
MARTYN RIX

Annuals and Biennials
by Roger Phillips and
Martyn Rix, see page 92.


ANNUALS AND BIENNIALS
ROGER PHILLIPS & MARTYN RIX
The first major illustrated work on annuals for over 150 years
Over 1,000 superb colour photographs make this the most comprehensive work on the subject ever published

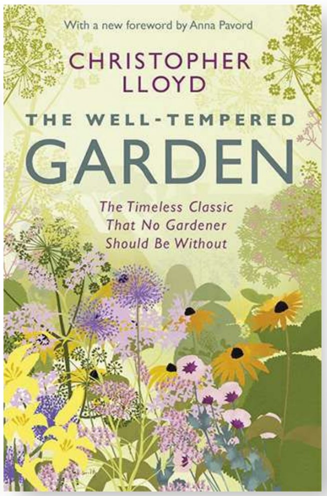
ANNUALS AND BIENNIALS
by Roger Phillips and Martyn Rix
Pan Books
ISBN 978-0330373524

Annuals and Biennials, the tenth volume of Phillips and Rix's Garden Plant Series, showcases more than 1,000 plants, both wild and cultivated, making it an invaluable reference guide. Plants are arranged in families and the accompanying text provides extensive details of not only the plants but also of the original wild species from which the garden plant derives. A brief introduction offers advice on seed raising and cultivation as well as lists of seed suppliers. In all, a well-illustrated and comprehensive study from two garden greats.


Beth Chatto's
Gravel Garden
Drought-resistant planting through the year
Photographs by Steven Wooster

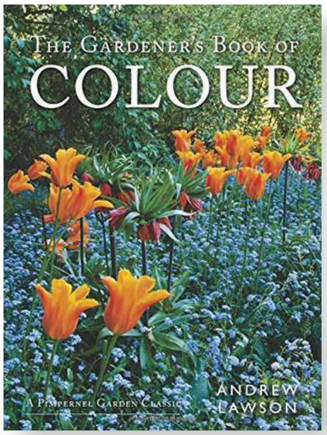
BETH CHATTO'S GRAVEL GARDEN
by Beth Chatto
Frances Lincoln
ISBN 978-0711214255

Arguably, any one of Beth Chatto's books is worth a place in your library, but her advice on drought-resistant planting is especially useful. Drawing on her own experience of tackling a dry and windswept gravel garden and using a no-nonsense approach, the experienced plantswoman demonstrates how every gardener can create a plot where plants flourish despite lack of water and poor soil – and regardless of scale.


With a new foreword by Anna Pavord
CHRISTOPHER LLOYD
THE WELL-TEMPERED
GARDEN
The Timeless Classic That No Gardener Should Be Without

THE WELL-TEMPERED GARDEN
by Christopher Lloyd
Weidenfeld & Nicolson
ISBN 978-1780227825

One of the great gardening classics. First published in 1978, and updated several times since, it's written by the late, great plantsman, Christopher Lloyd, who created of one of the most beautiful 20th-century gardens at Great Dixter in East Sussex. Known for his relaxed, non-technical manner, 'Christo' discusses many hundreds of plants with passion, intelligence and wit in this entertaining book that covers both the aesthetics and practical process required. Essential reading.


THE GARDENER'S BOOK OF
COLOUR
A PIMPERNEL GARDEN CLASSIC
ANDREW LAWSON

THE GARDENER'S BOOK OF COLOUR
by Andrew Lawson
Pimpernel Press
ISBN 978-1910258026

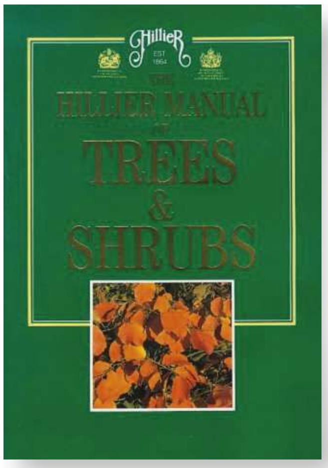
Andrew Lawson comes to garden photography with an artist's eye and scientific training, and he also draws on his experience as a gardener to illuminate his subject. Using detailed colour photographs and keyline planting plans, he demonstrates how colour has the power to change proportions, evoke different moods and harmonise space. He also includes plant directories, arranged by colour and flowering season as well as cultivation details for more than 850 plants.

LATHYRUS ODORATUS
SWEET PEA

Annuals and Biennials

RUSSET REDS AND YELLOWS

The Gardener's Book of Colour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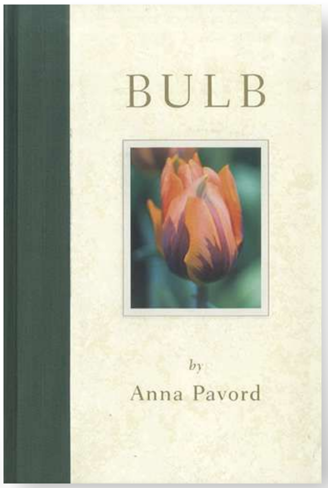
THE HILLIER MANUAL OF TREES & SHRUBS

THE HILLIER MANUAL OF TREES AND SHRUBS

by John G Hillier and
Roy Lancaster
Royal Horticultural Society
ISBN 190-7057471

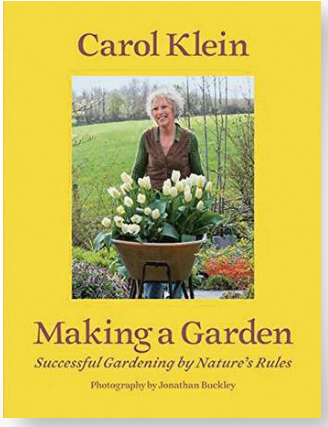
Another gardening classic that lists more than 650 genera. The list was first compiled by the internationally renowned Hillier Nurseries in 1972 and has since sold thousands of copies across the world. As well as detailed descriptions of more than 9,000 trees, shrubs, conifers and bamboos, it offers a botanical glossary and useful advice from expert Roy Lancaster. Every gardener should have a copy on their horticultural shelf.


BULB
by
Anna Pavord

BULB

by Anna Pavord
Mitchell Beazley
ISBN 978-1845335328

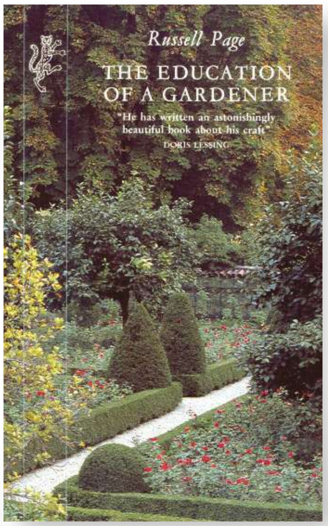
This comprehensive A-Z of bulbs – from *Acis* to *Zigadenus* – includes rare and unusual species as well as well-known favourites. Anna Pavord writes beautifully about plants and gardens and on every page she incorporates intriguing stories that help to bring the properties of the plant to life. Each bulb is illustrated and has thorough descriptive detail that highlights the garden writer's extensive knowledge and enduring passion for plants; an essential reference book.


Carol Klein
Making a Garden
Successful Gardening by Nature's Rules
Photography by Jonathan Buckley

MAKING A GARDEN: SUCCESSFUL GARDENING BY NATURE'S RULES

by Carol Klein
Mitchell Beazley
ISBN 978-1845337971

In her most recent book, acclaimed plantswoman – and *Gardens Illustrated* contributing editor – Carol Klein argues we should take inspiration for what will work in our gardens by looking at what works in similar conditions in the wild, be it woodland, wetland, hedgerow, meadow or seaside. Her common-sense approach to planting, with the view that nature knows best, is supplemented with plenty of plant suggestions and practical ideas.


Russell Page
THE EDUCATION OF A GARDENER
"He has written an astonishingly beautiful book about his craft"
DORIS LESSING

THE EDUCATION OF A GARDENER

by Russell Page
Vintage Publishing
ISBN 978-1846559259

Russell Page was one of the greatest landscape designers of the 20th century, and this 1962 book is frequently cited by designers and garden writers as essential reading. Trained as an artist, Page had a painter's eye for form and style, and when discussing matters of planning a garden, he encompasses all aspects, from plants to water features. His lucid advice is conveyed in an intelligent, pointed way. Provides food for thought and plenty of inspiration.

Bulb

Making a Garden: Successful Gardening by Nature's Rules

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

The Jakoustic fencing makes an attractive timber backdrop in the gorgeous Mediterranean Memories by Sally Perigo (one of the winning Jacksons show gardens, see more about this and products used in the garden online at www.jacksons-fencing.co.uk/lifestyle).

Jacksons Fencing

How can a fence change your life?

Back in 2005 I visited a lady who had installed a new type of fencing in her garden, that she said had changed her life. That's quite a claim, how could a fence make such a difference to someone's life?

Tracking back to before this happened, Mrs Young visited Jacksons Fencing. She was an existing customer of Jacksons and was desperate to find a solution to a problem; 30 years previously when she and her husband had moved into their house, it was a quiet rural area. Over time, a nearby road had become increasingly busy, traffic flow and speed had intensified to the extent it was no longer possible to enjoy time in their garden. The Youngs were considering moving house, but really didn't want to, they were very happy there apart from the noise of traffic becoming too loud to bear.

Another option was to possibly install a second fence line at the foot of their garden, and maybe even put an acoustic infill material in the gap between the two fences. This is why Mrs Young called in to Jacksons, to pick up the latest Good Fencing Guide with the thought of getting a second fence.

Well imagine her delight when she discovered she wasn't the only person wondering how to dampen problem noise by using a fence? Jacksons had just developed Jakoustic. Traditionally used as a motorway fencing system, acoustic barriers had been adapted for use in a residential setting.

Constructed from heavy-duty timber posts and panels made from thick tongue and groove style boards, Jakoustic has the appearance of any solid timber garden fence, and of course has the Jacksons unique 25-year Jakcure guarantee. This was the answer to Mrs Young's prayers. Once it was installed, they were overjoyed at the difference it made to the sound levels in their garden and they told me when I called in, "now the traffic noise is on the road and not in the garden!"

The Youngs also mentioned their friends and family have been very impressed at how good the fence looks and that it is now once again possible to hold a normal conversation in the garden. There's also no need to move from a house and area that they love, so this could be considered a very happy ending.

Now that's how a fence can change a life.

louise@jacksons-fencing.co.uk

Please go to www. **jacksons-fencing.co.uk/lifestyle** to find links to Jacksons acoustic barrier information.

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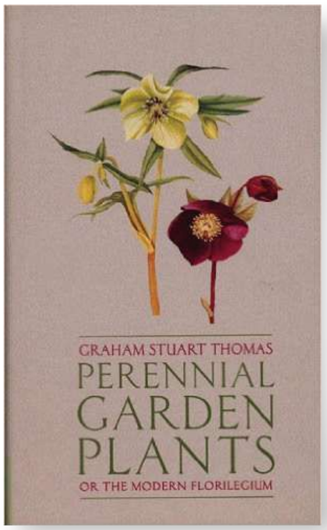
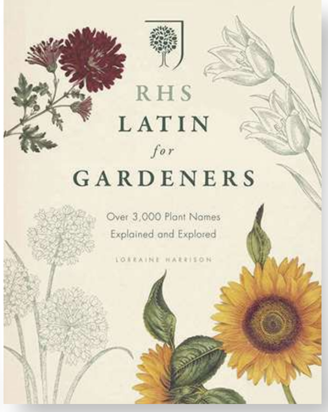
For info on any of Jacksons products or brochures please call **0800 408 4733** to talk to your local Jacksons Fencing Centre.


GRAHAM STUART THOMAS
PERENNIAL GARDEN PLANTS
OR THE MODERN FLORILEGIUM

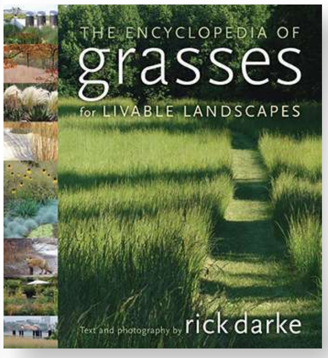
PERENNIAL GARDEN PLANTS OR THE MODERN FLORILEGIUM
by Graham Stuart Thomas
Frances Lincoln
ISBN 978-0711224032

First published in 1976, this comprehensive survey of perennial garden plants has been hailed as a classic since its initial publication. Horticulturist Graham Stuart Thomas has included more than 2,000 species and gives advice on planting, propagation and cultivation for each. He also covers a wealth of related topics, such as pests and diseases and planting displays, which provide an extra element and make this book an invaluable addition to any plant library.


RHS
LATIN for GARDENERS
Over 3,000 Plant Names Explained and Explored
LORRAINE HARRISON

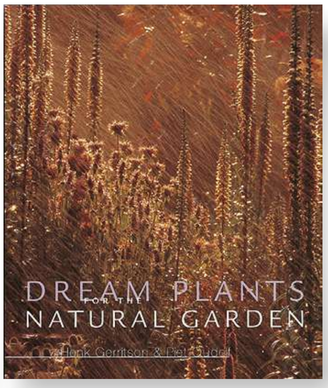
RHS LATIN FOR GARDENERS
by Lorraine Harrison
Mitchell Beazley
ISBN 978-1845337315

At first glance, botanical Latin can seem quite complicated but, as this book explains, there is a wealth of information hiding behind these tricksy binominals. Author Lorraine Harrison explains how an understanding of the meaning behind botanical names can reveal many of the properties of plants, such as their shape, scent and colour, which can help enormously when choosing the right plant for a garden. Illustrated with beautiful botanical drawings, and histories of botanists and their discoveries, it's a fascinating introduction.


THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
grasses
for LIVABLE LANDSCAPES
Text and photography by rick darke

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GRASSES FOR LIVABLE LANDSCAPES
by Rick Darke
Timber Press
ISBN 978-0881928174

Grass expert, Rick Darke explores the prominent role grasses play in the sustainability of green spaces, and provides practical advice for propagation, growth and maintenance. Using more than 1,000 photographs, taken by Darke himself, this comprehensive guide explores the role ornamental grasses can play in a domestic garden and contains details of true grasses, sedges, rushes and restios and cattails with ornamental merit.

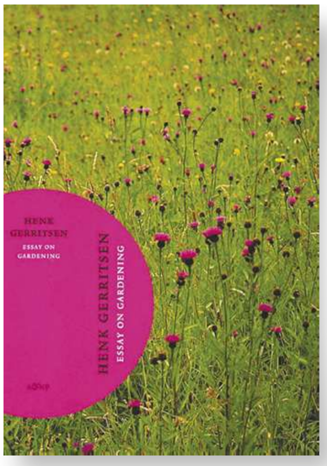

DREAM PLANTS FOR THE NATURAL GARDEN
Henk Gerritsen & Piet Oudolf

DREAM PLANTS FOR THE NATURAL GARDEN
by Piet Oudolf and Henk Gerritsen
Frances Lincoln
ISBN 978-0711217379

Piet Oudolf and Henk Gerritsen are two of the leading lights of the Dutch New Perennial Movement. In this collaboration they look at more than 1,200 plants suited to a naturalistic planting design that will retain their natural beauty throughout the year. These are plants that require little input from the gardener but provide endless enjoyment. A dream of a book for horticultural enthusiasts.

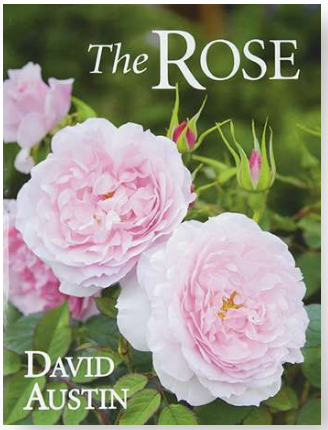
RHS Latin for Gardeners

The Encyclopedia of Grasses for Livable Landscapes


HENK GERRITSEN
ESSAY ON GARDENING

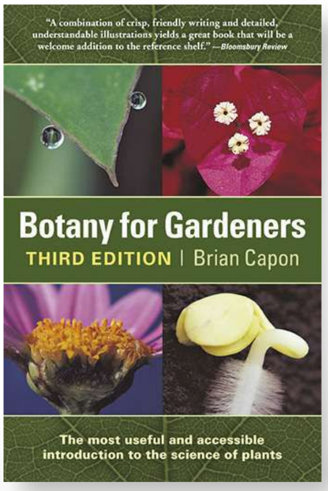
HENK GERRITSEN: ESSAY ON GARDENING
by Henk Gerritsen
Architectura & Natura Press
ISBN 978-9461400123

The late plantsman and gardener Henk Gerritsen was driven by a passion for naturalistic planting, and in this thought-provoking book, his meditations on planting are wide ranging. From his earliest memories of gardening, his inspirations, his working relationship with Piet Oudolf and the impact of the New Perennial Movement, it goes on to discuss ecology, the building blocks of a garden, from plants to 'frills and knick-knacks', and the impact of urban development.


The ROSE
DAVID AUSTIN

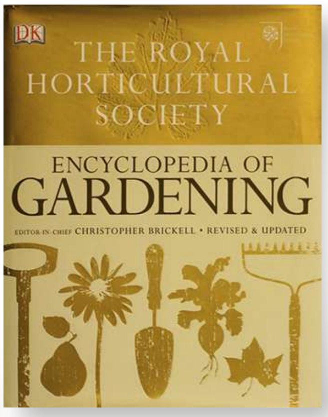
THE ROSE
by David Austin
ACC Distribution
ISBN 978-1870673785

If you could choose only one book about the rose for your horticultural library, this is it. Rose guru, David Austin discusses the historic development of the rose and its place within our gardens. Each major group of roses is accounted for under chapters devoted to old roses, hybrid teas and floribundas, small roses, species roses, shrub roses, climbing roses and rambling roses. With clear advice and a comprehensive list of roses illustrated with colour photography, it's an invaluable reference book for rose lovers.


"A combination of crisp, friendly writing and detailed, understandable illustrations yields a great book that will be a welcome addition to the reference shelf." —Bloomsbury Review
Botany for Gardeners
THIRD EDITION | Brian Capon
The most useful and accessible introduction to the science of plants

BOTANY FOR GARDENERS
by Brian Capon
Timber Press
ISBN 978-1604690958

Known for his clear description of how plants work, Brian Capon uses *Botany for Gardeners* to provide a detailed guide to a plant's inner workings, from the biological detail of the plant itself to its relationship to the natural world. The revised editions include new essays on current topics that address the effect of climate change and the role of genetic engineering, making it a useful, up-to-date reference for any gardener interested in the inner workings of the botanical world.


DK
THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GARDENING
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF CHRISTOPHER BRICKELL • REVISED & UPDATED

RHS ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GARDENING
edited by Chris Brickell
DK
ISBN 978-1409383949

First published more than 20 years ago, this RHS gardening bible has been regularly updated over the years to include more modern garden trends, such as green walls and growing vegetables in containers. Divided into two parts – Creating a Garden and Maintaining the Garden – the book provides advice on garden design along with practical planting tips. Its wide range of topics and illustrated, step-by-step instructions make this a must-have reference book.

Henk Gerritsen: Essay on Gardening

Some of the featured books are available to readers at special rates. For details of book offers, arranged in association with Sparkle Direct, **call 01326 569444 or visit gardensillustrated.com/bookshop**

Some of the titles listed here, and others mentioned elsewhere in the magazine, are available to order via gardensillustrated.com/bookshop. Alternatively, call 01326 569444 with your credit or debit card details, or send a cheque payable to *Gardens Illustrated* to: ***Gardens Illustrated* Bookshop, PO Box 60, Helston TR13 0TP.**

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WORDS: ALYS HURN. MANY THANKS TO JOHN HOYLAND FOR HIS HELP IN COMPILING THIS LIST.

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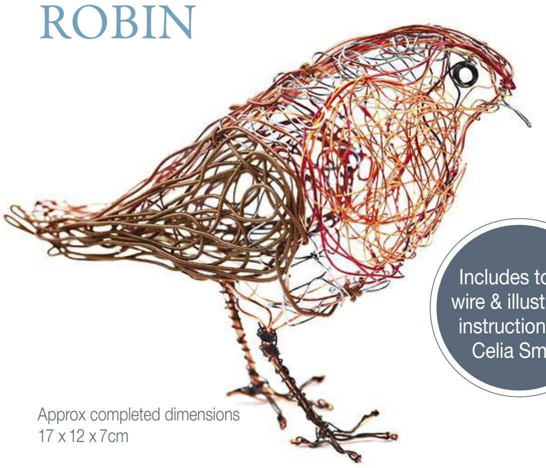

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The English Gardening School is offering a 50 per cent discount to the first ten readers of *Gardens Illustrated* who sign up for one of its distance-learning courses.

The offer applies to both Garden Design and Caring for Your Garden courses – normally priced at £495 (plus postage). The courses have been written by Rosemary Alexander, the school's principal, and are carefully structured according to the diploma curriculum but adapted for distance learning. This makes them ideal for those who need more flexibility to study in their own time, or can't attend the college in person. Courses take from one to three years to complete.

The courses

Garden Design A step-by-step guide to designing your own garden. Taking you through drawing up a plan, planning the space, hard-landscape layout and planting plans, plus how to draw up your proposals.

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How to apply

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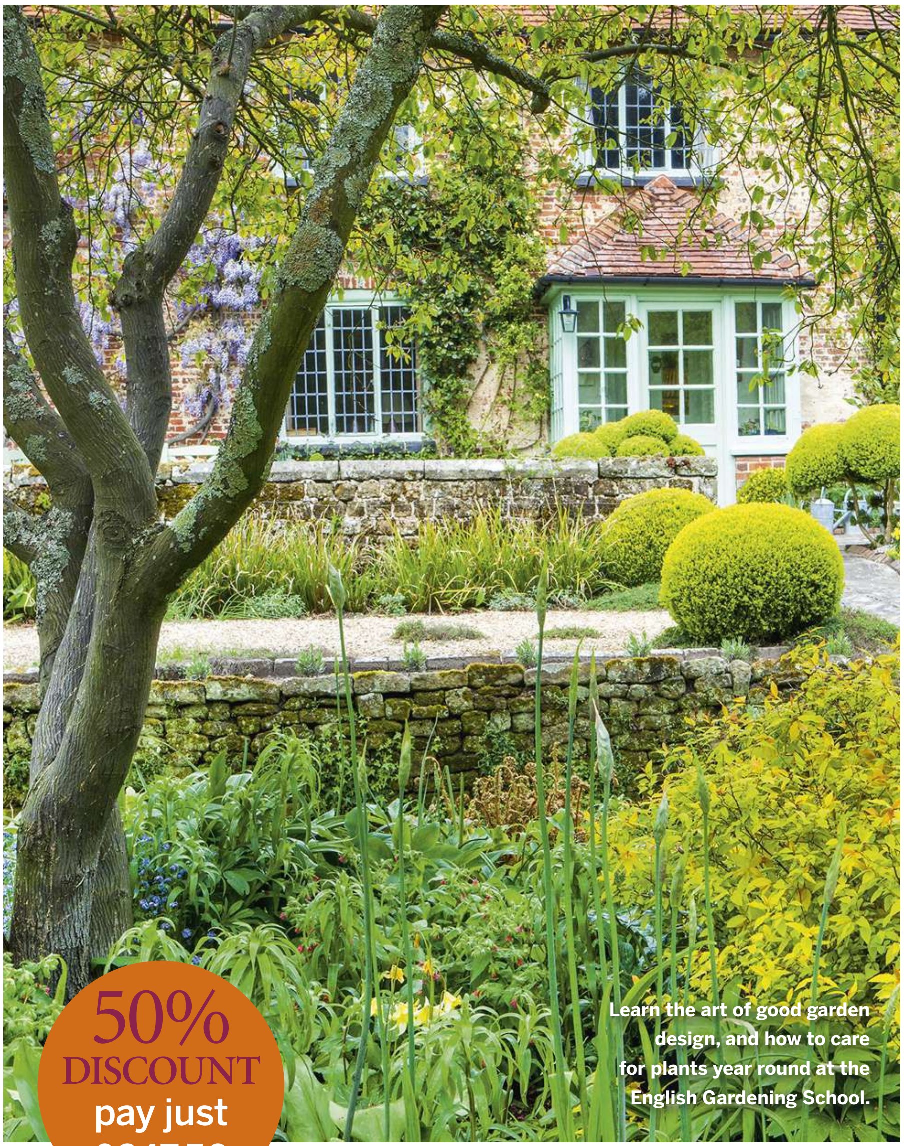
The discount does not include the cost of postage. Offer ends 30 December 2015.



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When regular *Gardens Illustrated* photographer Andrew Montgomery sent in his shots for our article on cutting garden flowers (see page 52), we thought them just too beautiful for the magazine alone. So, we're delighted to be offering readers the opportunity to buy prints of each of the images.

Available in two sizes and limited to a run of 50 prints per image in each size, the photographs are reproduced as archival quality giclée prints on Hahnemühle Photo Rag 310gsm paper, which gives a warm, textured matte finish.

With many thanks to Anne Townley of Ascott Gardens who created these cut flower selections: ascottgardens.co.uk

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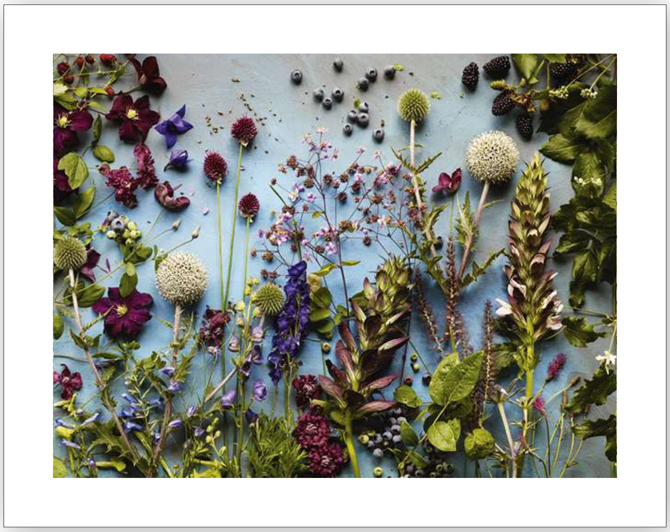
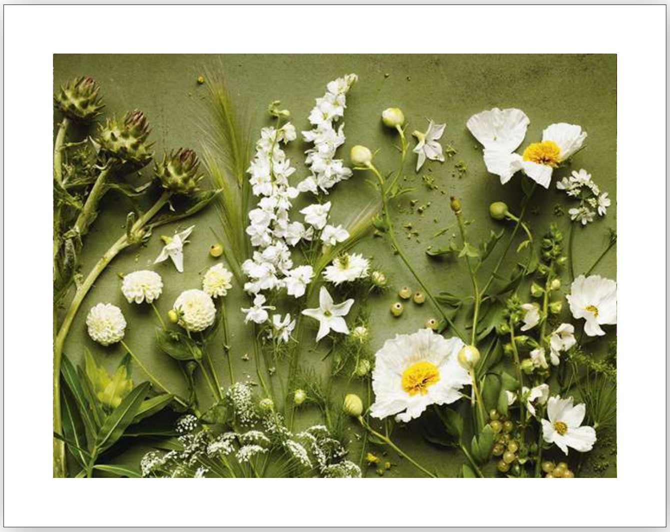
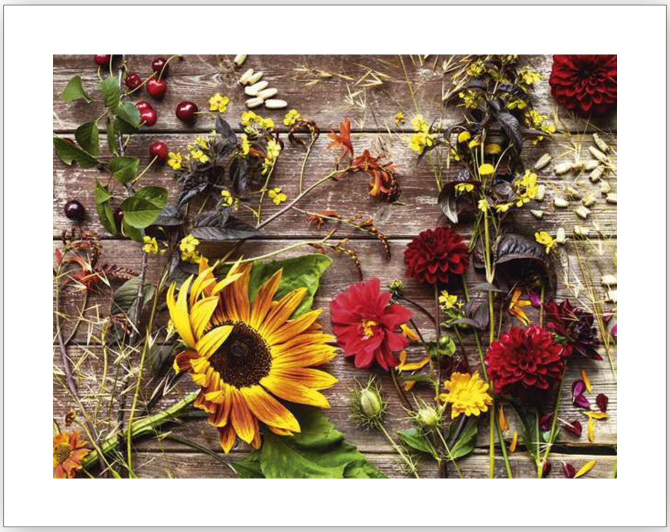


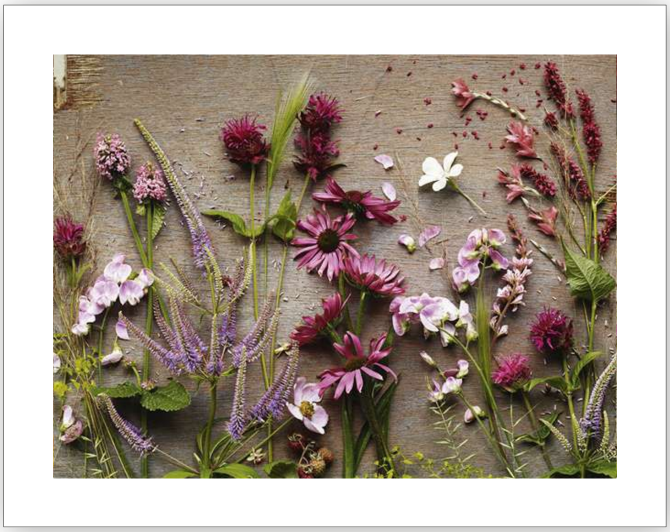
Purple Haze A dreamy mix of blues and purples using clematis, echinops, thalictrum, blueberry and striking acanthus.



White Delight A cool and calming selection, including delphinium, white dahlias, verbascum, whitecurrants and delicate umbellifers.



Golden Glow Combining warm oranges and reds, including helenium, crocosmia, sunflower, dahlia, marigold and briza.



Pink Perfection A lovely tonal range of pinks with sweet pea, veronicastrum, monarda, anemone, echinacea and bergamot.

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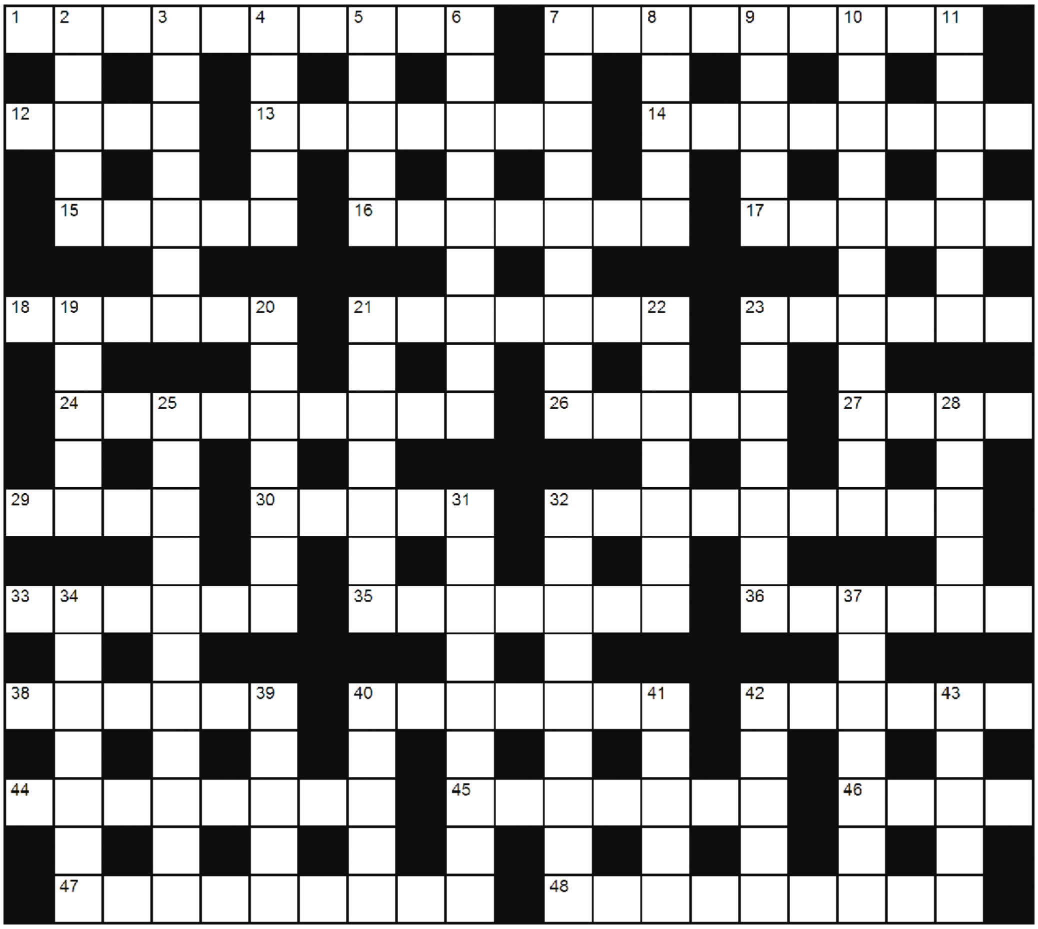

ACROSS

1 Pink-flowering, glossy-leaved shrub – a lilac one's fantastic! (10)

7/12 Sacred city's wise man produces a yellow *Phlomis* (9,4)

13 A brassica plant – may be associated with cress? (7)

14 Russet apple – one removed from mango tree surprisingly (8)

15 Blackthorn fruits less varied around centre of row (5)

16 Rockery plant appearing in Italy's summertime (7)

17 A salmon-coloured amaryllis to covet (6)

18 Some wasp eradicated a lacecap hydrangea species (6)

21 Small fern growing in rock crevices etc – western laurel, possibly (4,3)

23 Bath the place for this sponge gourd? (6)

24 King Alfred and Empress of Ireland, say, seen in spring gardens! (9)

26 Exceptionally sweet blackcurrant variety – one by rocks (5)

27 Colour of *Dianthus* leaves (4)

29 Fruit tree of *Pyrus* genus – two, it's said (4)

30 Curbs flower stalks (5)

32 A yellow magnolia for a long-reigning monarch (9)

33 Genus of wattle – if 'False' it's *Robinia* (6)

35 Janet humbly reveals the genus of dill (7)

36 *Hosta* with blue leaves – awfully limp in middle of elders (6)

38 Genus of a white, lacy annual in propagator, lay askew (6)

40 I'd seven different salad plants of chicory genus (7)

42 British maincrop potato – partly gather me some (6)

44 *Delphinium*'s common name (8)

45 Genus of yellow-flowering plant in aster family – possibly ours? Yep! (7)

46 Pupil's surrounded by this showy flower (4)

47 Common name for *Potentilla erecta*: 'Triton Elm' perhaps (9)

48 Wager a tin actually contains a plant genus attractive to butterflies (9)

DOWN

2 Breaks shortened antirrhinums (5)

3 The 'windflower' woodland plant one man moved east (7)

4 Slime-producing linden trees (5)

5 Tony's saplings include the tupelo tree genus (5)

6 *Hippeastrum*'s common name – small, airy variety (9)

7 Common name of *Cercis siliquastrum*, associated with a traitor (5,4)

8 Space (it's said) for the rhubarb genus (5)

9 Reduce garden waste, for example – just a bit (5)

10 Oddly bemoans glut of less common name for woolly leaved *Stachys byzantina* (5,6)

11 Bergamot genus – a random arrangement (7)

19 Grass-like plant's southern rim (5)

20 So, a loan's arranged for the 'Mask flower' (7)

21 Shrub with bell-shaped flowers, eg 'Ruby Queen' (7)

22 Genus of plants in geranium family, possibly mouldier – left out (7)

23 A fast-growing cypress in Wisley landscape (7)

25 Yellow-flowering loosestrife – goes with a bang (11)

28 Red, dwarf rhododendron in thicket, Heligan (5)

31 Veronica, by another name – rush by water source (9)

32 Genus of succulent plants with fleshy leaved rosettes makes Eric heave (9)

34 A fruit of *Ribes* is reportedly up to date (7)

37 A dwarf euphorbia makes a gin/vermouth cocktail! (7)

39 Fruit that's big in America? (5)

40 Regrettably holds a white, dwarf rhododendron (5)

41 The appearance of a *Lithops* plant – fourteen pounds! (5)

42 Master of ceremonies with a genus of perennial foliage plants (5)

43 Heath genus I included in *Acer* variety (5)

For answers see page 107

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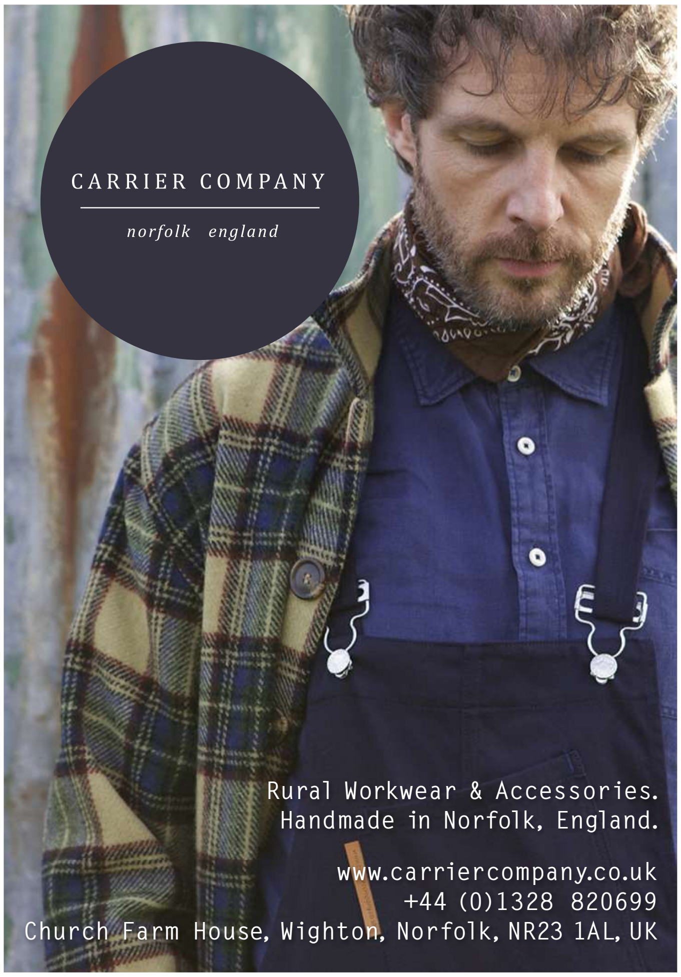

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ACROSS 1 Escallonia **7/12** Jerusalem sage **13** Mustard **14** Egremont **15** Sloes **16** Alyssum **17** Desire **18** Aspera **21** Wall rue **23** Loofah **24** Daffodils **26** Ebony **27** Grey **29** Pear **30** Stems **32** Elizabeth **33** Acacia **35** Anethum **36** Dimple **38** Orlaya **40** Endives **42** Hermes **44** Larkspur **45** Euryops **46** Iris **47** Tormentil **48** Ageratina. **DOWN 2** Snaps **3** Anemone **4** Limes **5** Nyssa **6** Amaryllis **7** Judas tree **8** Rheum **9** Shred **10** Lambs tongue **11** Monarda **19** Sedge **20** Alonsoa **21** Weigela **22** Erodium **23** Leyland **25** Firecracker **28** Ethel **31** Speedwell **32** Echeveria **34** Currant **37** Martini **39** Apple **40** Egret **41** Stone **42** Hosta **43** Erica.

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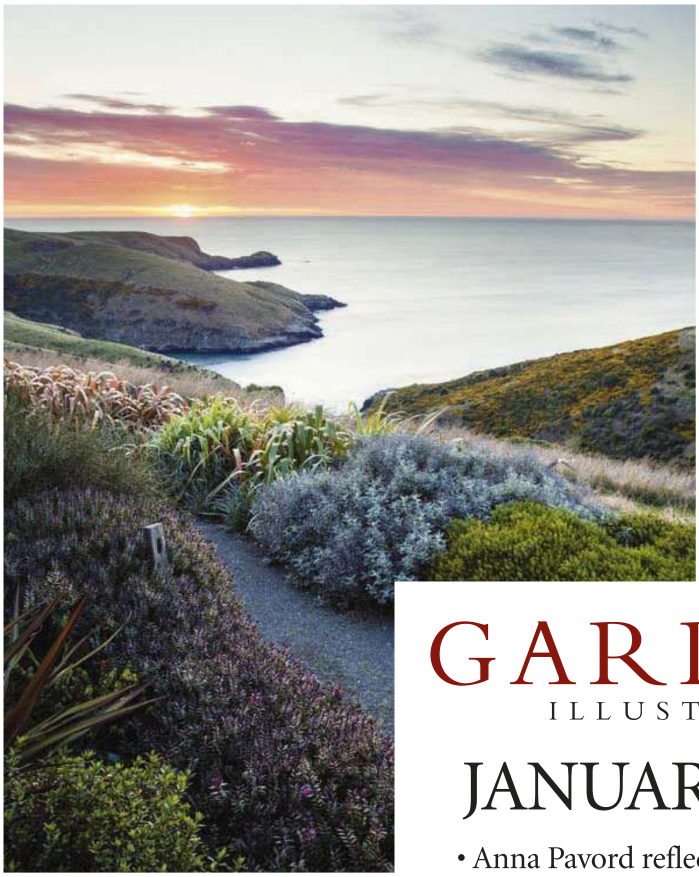

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Purple stain

Frank feels now is the time to right an old wrong even if it will mean a few ruined shirts

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **CELIA HART**

It is time to redress an injustice I did to a mulberry tree a few years ago. It was a present from a friend at a time when I had grander illusions about what the garden would be and couldn't see a place for it in my schemes. So I put it in the wettest hedge corner and left it to take its chances where, predictably and quickly, it died. Had I been less mean I might be eating mulberries this year, and I now see plenty of places a mulberry could have gone that would be all the better for being graced by it.

Mulberries collapse to juice the moment they are touched, and they do not fall so gently into your hand

The black mulberry is a fruit you can't buy from a greengrocer, the reason for which you discover soon as you harvest them and find yourself stained in purple from head to foot. They collapse to juice the moment they are touched, and they do not fall so gently into your hand. The flavour has a distinctive tartness and they cook well, but the greatest pleasure is searching out the ripest to plunder on each passing of the tree on a hot August day. Dark fruit among dark leaves, the first sign they are ready is often stains on the path below.

One of the reasons I was so unkind to the mulberry tree I was given was that it was a cultivar called 'Illinois Everbearing' which is said to grow three metres a year and have insipid fruit. There is credible doubt about it being a form of *Morus nigra* at all, some sources speculating that it might be a hybrid of *M. alba* and *M. rubra*. What I should have done, immediately following the tactical assassination, and what I will do before this winter is out, was to go to the nice fruit nursery down the road and get a cultivar called 'Wellington' from them. This is said to fruit earlier than 'Chelsea' or straight *M. nigra*, which should be an advantage in my cool climate.

From an aesthetic point of view you wouldn't want a thing that grew as fast as Illinois in any case. Proper mulberries form neat weeping hemispheres on a garden scale and should not be great lolloping monsters blocking out the sun. I remember when we used to stay with friends in Arcadia that you never saw a fruit on any of the mulberry trees that lined the streets of the town, which was because the leaves and young branches were cut in late summer as animal fodder (handy, when there was not much else green about). That presumably means that fruit is borne on the previous year's growth and so the last thing you want is a tree that needs to be constantly pollarded down to size.

You are always being shown mulberries that are said to be a great age, originally planted in the reign of whichever Tudor or Stuart springs first to the owner's mind. I am told by more cynical friends that, with their gnarly bark and drooping habit, they take on the appearance of being ancient while relatively young. And also, their tendency to split and break under their own weight, combined with an ability to root from quite large branches, mean that the tree in question is more likely to be a descendant than the actual one that stained the slipper of Queen Bess.

Frank Ronan is a novelist who gardens in both the UK and USA.

So, in another few years, I look forward to ruining my own shirts with my own fruit. I know, from the experiences of friends, that mulberries don't always take so easily and I may have one or two failures before finding the place that is well enough drained for it. But it is one of the oddities of life that patience grows as time becomes shorter. In your twenties you never think of planting a tree that might take ten years to fruit. Now, in my fifties, ten years seems nothing to wait. And, perhaps, there is time yet for the tree to seem ancient before I do. □

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creative garden lighting

Spike spotlight

A guide for lighting trees

Through the introduction of some subtle lighting, skilfully picking out branches or lighting the whole tree, one can create a lovely ambience and bring structure and warmth to your garden.

Trees vary enormously in size and shape, but most trees can be lit very well using fittings with 36 degree or 60 degree beam angles.

Narrow trees such as Silver Birch, Scots Pine and most conifers work best with a 36 degree light source. Medium spreading trees like Robinia, Cherry or Lime need lights with a 60 degree beam angle. While wide spreading mature Oaks and Cedars will usually require more than one light to achieve reasonable coverage. Extremely narrow subjects such as Italian Cypress could be lit using a very narrow light source, but in practice a 36 degree light will usually be effective.

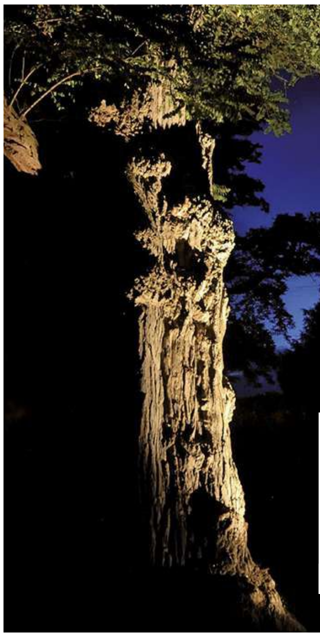
If a tree has an open canopy the light can be placed close to the trunk and pointed upwards to good dramatic effect. But where the foliage is dense it is better to light it up from the edge of the canopy. Grazing the outside in this way emphasizes textures and avoids the lower branches blocking the light from reaching the top.

Larger trees require something much more energy efficient such as metal halide or led. Metal halide is a very good light source but it does suffer from one major drawback. The lamp must be matched to the control gear which means you can't change the lamp brightness later on. Also the lamps can't easily be dimmed.

LED's are rapidly improving and there are now led lights capable of lighting large trees. If you require a light with a very wide spread you could consider some of the new 30w, 50w or 100w led floodlights. But positioning them is critical as none of them offer any proper glare control. For lighting very small trees you might consider one of the Compact Spike Spots (available in 12v or 240v) with a 5w or 7w led. If you need recessed fittings the Modula range of lights are a good choice; very solidly built with adjustable lamp holders which you can angle up to 30 degrees, also available in 12v or 240v. If you are using 60 degree lamps it is worth considering P520B and Taurus spike spots which have excellent glare control while not constricting the spread of light.

Apollo

Slightly larger trees (3-5 metres) need more light than you can get from a single spike spot. You could consider the Titan 10 watt led 240v spike spot.



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